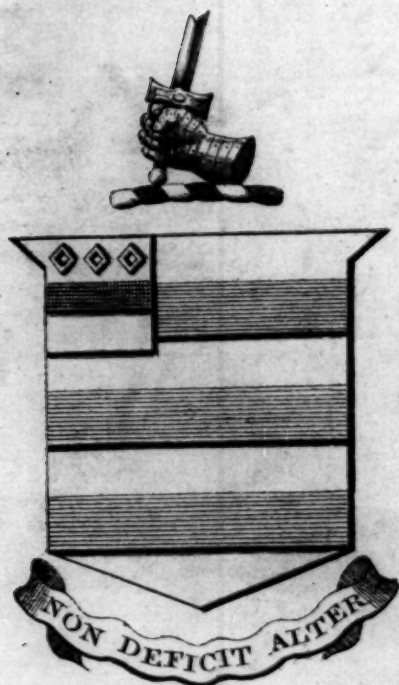
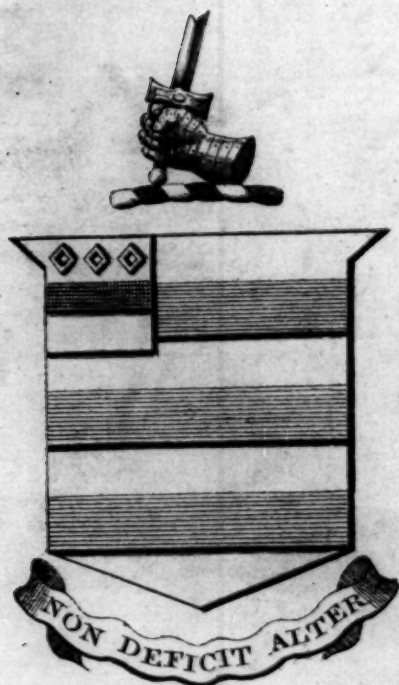
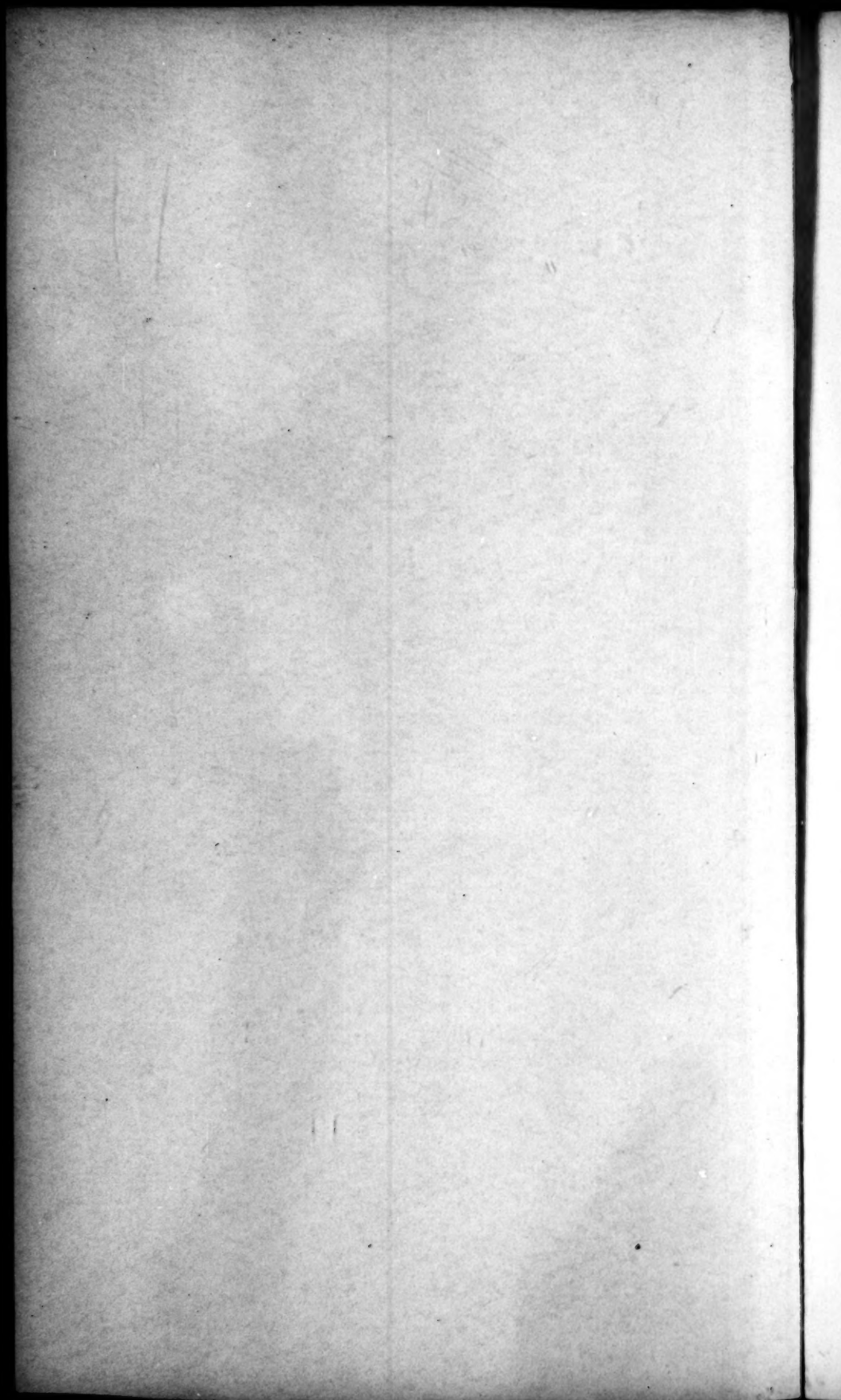




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Nathanael Ellison.

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S E C R E T
HISTORIES,
NOVELS and POEMS,

By Mrs. ELIZA HAYWOOD.

V O L. IV.

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BY MRS. ELIZA HAYWOOD

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THE SECOND PART

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THE
RASH RESOLVE;
OR, THE
Untimely Discovery.
A NOVEL, *In Two Parts.*

By Mrs. ELIZA HAYWOOD.

*Woman is soft, and of a tender Heart,
Apt to receive, and to retain Love's Dart:
Man has a Breast robust, and more secure;
It wounds him not so deep, nor hits so sure.*

CONGREVE.

THE THIRD EDITION.

THE
RASH RESOLVE;
OR, THE
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A NOVEL, IN TWO PARTS.

By Mrs. ELIZA HAYWOOD.

Women is soft, and of a tender Heart,
Apt to receive, and to retain Love's Dart:
Man has a Breast rough, and more secure;
It wounds him not so deep, nor runs so pure.
CONGRATULATE.

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(I)



THE
RASH RESOLVE:
OR, THE
Untimely Discovery.

PART I.



H O' nothing is more laudable than a Firmness of Resolution; yet there is no one thing more apt to bring us into Misfortunes, than too inconsiderately to form them: Whoever fixes a Determination to do, or leave undone any Action of Importance, ought to advise with Time, and deliberately weigh not only all apparent Obstacles, but also all that may possibly arise either to thwart the present Intention, or oblige Repentance, if compleated. If the most lively and penetrating Wit that ever was known, a Wisdom wonderful in Youth, a Depth of Learning, which scarce any of the Fair Sex could boast,

2 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

an elevated Genius, and Sublimity of Thought, a Soul compos'd of Honour, Courage, Gratitude, Generosity, Fortitude, and all those Virtues which wear the Name of *Manly*, joined with Tenderness, Sweetness of Disposition, and every Grace with which the *softer* Specie attracts and charms, could render the Person possess'd of them happy, the lovely Subject of the following Sheets had been as remarkable for her good Fortune, as the ill Influence of her Stars have made her for the contrary.

EMANUELLA, so she was call'd, was born in *Porto-Rico*, one of those Islands belonging to the *Spanish West-Indies*, the Government of which had been given to her Father, Don ALVAREZ, by his most Catholick Majesty. She had the misfortune to lose her Mother very young; but notwithstanding that, and the Disadvantage of being educated in a Place which could boast of but little Politeness, the Care and Tenderness of ALVAREZ, whose only Child she was, sufficiently compensated for all other Wants: Perceiving her of an uncommon *Aptitude* for Learning, he sent for the best Masters to instruct her in the Latin, French, and Italian Tongues, in which she became so perfect in a little time, as also in Musick, Dancing, Singing and Painting, that it was hard to say in which she most excell'd: All the Muses! all the Virtues! all the Graces! seem'd assembled in her Soul, and inspir'd her Conversation with such different ways of charming, that what kind soever the Heart was most affected with, one might be sure to find it there: As to the Beauties of her Person, tho' few of the most celebrated ones could boast of more, yet they were so far exceeded by those of the interior Part, that I shall only say, the Brightness of her *Mind* shone in her *Eyes*, enliven'd all her Air, and whether she spoke, or look'd, or mov'd, an awe-mix'd Sweetness spread it self a-round

The Untimely DISCOVERY. 3

round her, at once surprizing, pleasing and commanding.

ADORN'D with all these shining Qualifications, 'tis easy to believe how dear she was to her Father; but alas! it was not many years after she was capable of knowing how happy she was, before she lost it, the good ALVAREZ died when she was about Fifteen, and it was from that fatal Moment she might date the beginning of that Series of continued Woe, which to the end of her Life attended her; not but she was left in a Circumstance, which, if Wealth could bribe ill Fate, was sufficient to shield her from all the Vexations of Life; but where a Person is destin'd to Misfortunes, that which to *others* would prove a *Blessing*, is to them a *Curse*; the Riches she was possess'd of, serv'd but to attract a Number of *pretended* Friends, but in reality only so to *themselves*; and the open, noble Frankness of her Disposition, to lay her liable to their Insinuations. She was so entirely free from all Deceit and Artifice herself, that till a too dear Experience convinced her, it was very difficult for her to entertain a Belief there was such Baseness in the World.

BUT to go on gradually with the little History I am about to make: The time of Mourning for ALVAREZ was no sooner expired, than she began to have a passionate Desire to leave the Place she was in; the Delicacy of her Taste, joined to the Improvements of her Education, made her uneasy to continue where she could find nothing like herself to converse with: besides, she had many Relations at *Madrid*, and did not doubt but in so populous a City, she should meet with Entertainments suitable to her Genius. But how great was her Vexation, when having prepared every thing for her Departure, she met with an Obstacle entirely unforeseen? Don PEDRO, who by her Father's Will, and her own Consent was made her Guardian,

4 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

dian, having the vast Fortune left her in his Possession, could not think of parting with it so easily; he had a Son, whom ever since the Death of ALVAREZ, he had been casting about how to ingratiate to the Affections of this young Heiress: He had indeed never hinted any such matter to her as yet; nor had the intended Lover made the least Declaration of a Passion, but it was only because the one thought it early enough, and that there being none of a superior Fortune in the Place, there was little danger of the Offer being refused whenever it should be made; and the Silence of the other proceeded from a just Sensibility of his own Demerits, and a true Respect for the engaging EMANUELLA: for he had so little to recommend him in his Person, that had his Soul been possess'd of no greater Beauties, he would have been but little regarded by all that knew him. His Stature was very diminutive, his Limbs unhappily fram'd, his Face cast in a Mould so rough, whoever look'd on it, would have believed that Nature was absent at his Formation, and left the Work to Chance; his very Voice was disagreeable, and his hesitating Accents disgrac'd the Meaning he endeavour'd to express. But in this unlovely Out-side, there was a Jewel lock'd, whose Worth made full amends for all his other Wants: He had excellent Sense, Honour, Good-Nature, Generosity, and a thousand other Virtues, better described by his own Actions, than by the Pen of any Writer; but had he been possess'd of more good Qualities than ever Man pretended to, it could not be expected, that with these interior Charms alone, a Lady so young and beautiful, as EMANUELLA, could be influenced. She was indeed too good a Judge of Wit herself, not to admire it in another; she acknowledged Don MARCO's, (for that was his Name) and would often, notwithstanding the Misfortune of his ill manner of Delivery, take Pleasure in hearing

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hearing his Notions of things. She approv'd of his Conversation, and had a very great Friendship for him, till the Knowledge of his, or rather his Father's Designs, reversed those favourable Thoughts, and turn'd her all into Disdain.

BEING resolv'd to leave the Island with the first Ship, she sent for Don PEDRO, to advise with him on the ordering her Affairs; she could not think it safe or practicable to take her whole Effects with her, and therefore thought it proper to settle a Correspondence how they might be sent after her, and in what hands trusted. Don PEDRO, who before had heard of her Design, thought it now high time to discover the Secret he so long had kept; and making her a low Bow: It is easy, Madam, *said he*, for us to contrive means to send your Fortune either to *Madrid*, or any other Place you shall command: but it will not be so easy to bring us to consent to the parting with your self.— You here receiv'd your Being;— here your Education;—are a Native—a Property of this Place; and when you attempt to deprive us of that Right we claim of your Presence, the whole Island would rise in Arms; nor ought you to wonder if in so just a Cause I should appear their Head, and force your Stay, if soft Persuasion fails. The old Gentleman was so little accustomed to Gallantry, that EMANUELLA could not help laughing at these Words, which she had not the least Thought were spoke with any other Design; and perceiving he had done, Well well Don PEDRO! *return'd she*, I do not doubt but in such a Cause as this I should be able to make my party good against the Islanders, even tho' you should appear their Head, as you threaten; but to shew you that I am not for War, if Peace may be maintain'd on honourable Terms, pray what have you to offer me here in lieu of those Advantages I may expect elsewhere? That (*reply'd the other hastily*) which if duly weigh'd, is of

6 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

more Estimation than the whole World beside; — a *Love* accompanied by Sincerity, Constancy, and Truth, — a Passion pure as the Zeal which warms the Martyr's Breast, and everlasting as his Reward. All this was so far from giving her any Notion of his Intention, that she had no other Surprize than to find him in a Disposition so different from his former Gravity; and believing he assum'd this Air of Raillery only to divert her, would not baulk his Good-Humour, but return'd an Answer such as she thought suitable to the Occasion: If you were in a Condition (*said she merrily*) I should be half in hope it was of your Heart I had made so great a Conquest; but as you are not yet, nor like to be a Widower, I must entreat you to inform me who it is has felt the Effects of a Power I never had any Reason to have an Opinion of till now. Alas! Madam, (*resumed the Don*) it would ill become the Autumn of my Age to attempt to please the delightful Bloom of yours. — No, no, I would not thus affront your Beauty. — But I have a Son, whose Years will not disgrace the Passion he professes — nor will his Suit, I hope, be unworthy your Regard. These Words were like a Clap of Thunder to EMANUELLA's Ears: the manner in which they were spoke, joined to a thousand little Passages, which when they happened, were unheeded, but now all at once occur'd to her Remembrance, made her indeed believe he meant what he said: But not yet fully assured, And are you in earnest? *cry'd she*, (with a Voice which testified both her Amazement and Indignation.) But he, whose Pride would not permit him to be easily quell'd, was so far from excusing the Presumption of his Application, that he rather resented the little Deference she paid him. I know not, *resumed he*, for what reason you should make a doubt of it; there is not so great a Disparity either in Birth or Fortune, to oblige you to think
it

The Untimely DISCOVERY. 7

it strange I should offer at an Alliance. — You will leave me to Judge of that (*answer'd she, growing still more disturb'd*) but I desire not a Repetition of Genealogies, or a Calculation how many Thousands either of us are possess'd of; 'tis sufficient I am not ignorant what is in your hands of mine, which I shall call for in, as soon as I have consider'd of a Person proper to be intrusted in such an Affair. She spoke no more at that time, but continued walking up and down the Room, by her outward Disorders making visible the inward Agitations of her Soul: Don PEDRO, who had as much Cunning as Pride, observ'd every Motion, and believing he had gone too far, endeavour'd to mitigate the Boldness of his first Expressions, by pleading his Concern for the Welfare of an only Son, who could not live without her. But all he could say to this purpose, was ineffectual to abate the Indignation she had conceiv'd at so disproportionate a Proposal, and the more he endeavour'd at it, the more she grew incens'd; till at last weary of his Importunities, she desir'd him to leave her House, and to prepare to make up his Accompts with her by the next day; still assuring him she was determined to take shipping by the first Opportunity. The Chagreen this Accident gave her, was very great; she was disappointed in the Hope of maintaining a friendly Correspondence with a Man who had the Power of being very serviceable to her in those Affairs which she was unexperienced in, and which her Soul, delighting in sublimer Contemplations, was unwilling to be amus'd in. Young as she was, she had a very good guess at the Language of the Eyes, and easily found by his, that she must expect no Obligations from him, unless she could consent to come into his Measures, than which nothing could be more averse to her Inclinations, and consequently to her Designs; for she was not of a Disposition to resolve on the one,

8 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

without having first consulted the other: But tho' she foresaw many little Vexations would attend this Quarrel with her *Guardian*, yet she was far from having any Suspicion, he had Baseness enough in his Nature to act in the manner he was already forming, and she soon after experienc'd.

THIS sordid-temper'd Wretch always look'd on every thing as his own that once he had the Possession of; and to think of parting with so much Money as the mistaken good Opinion of ALVAREZ had entrusted him with, was such a Dagger to his Heart, that he had resolv'd rather to have recourse to any Measures, than to endure it: He therefore contriv'd a Scheme, which by the Vileness, as well as Cunning of it, one would think could only be suggested by the Devil himself; he pretended that the late Governor, to maintain himself in a Grandeur far beyond what either his Post or Paternal Estate would allow, had at several times borrowed vast Sums of Money of him, some of which had been repaid, and for the Security of the remaining Part, had made over his Jewels, Plate, Household-Goods, and all other Moveables to him, and sent Officers to seize immediately on every thing. It was to no purpose that EMANUELLA, surpriz'd as she was, had Presence of Mind to argue on this score more like a Person whom many Years experience had made perfect in the Law, than a young Virgin, who till this Hour ne'er knew what 'twas to hear a Word which had the sound of Business. — But in vain it was, that she represented the Illegality of the Action, that she might justly sue them for a Robbery, there being nothing really due to Don PEDRO, or if there had, he could not justify the seizing on her Goods without a long Process, and a Warrant proper for that End. They told her their Business was not to examine into the Merits of the Cause, Don PEDRO must look to that; they had
an

The Untimely DISCOVERY. 9

an Order for what they did, and if she thought herself injur'd, she must make Appeal elsewhere. These sort of Replies were all her fine Reasoning could draw from them, and she would not make use of Reproaches to them, who she knew did but as their Function required, but reserv'd them all for the base PEDRO. She several times sent to his House, and other Places in search of him, but he was no where to be found, and she was obliged, without even the Satisfaction of Complaint, to see her rich Furniture torn down by the Hands of these robust Fellows, her Wardrobe ransacked, her Coffers born away to the House of PEDRO, while herself was left without so much as a Bed to lie on, or a second Suit of Clothes to change, for those she had on. — She was not without Consideration by what means she should seek Redress for so inhuman and unexampled a Wrong; but alas! the artful Villain had watch'd his Opportunity, the Persons appointed by her Father's Will *Trustees*, were neither of them at that time on the Island, and the new Governour, not being yet arrived, there was no body in whose power it was to examine into this Affair; and against there was, he had provided, if the worst should happen, some to make Oath of Debts contracted by ALVAREZ, and an Inventory of that Part of his personal Estate which he had seiz'd (and might easily do, having them in his Possession) to prove that they were also assigned to him: Nor was this the Extent of his monstrous Stratagem, as she was left in a desolate and naked House, with only three or four of her weeping Servants, not yet determined where or to whom she should fly for Shelter, the same Officers again broke in, and seiz'd her Person, by the same Orders as they had done her Effects: This last Stroke was infinitely more severe to her, than all the rest had been; at Liberty, she was not without hope of some Redress; but to be

10 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

confin'd, and in the power of so inhuman a Villain, gave her Apprehensions, which not all her stock of Courage could enable her to sustain: She fainted several times before they carried her away; the Fellows who at this Sight, hardened as they were, began to feel Compassion, endeavour'd to give her some Consolation, by telling her their Orders were not to carry her to Prison, but to the House of Don PEDRO, who 'twas possible would come to Terms of Accommodation with her; but this was so far from working the Effect they aim'd at, that it gave an Addition to her Perplexities. Oh! (*said she*) bear me to Prison, to Death, to any thing, rather than place me under the Roof of that consummate Villain! that Fiend more black than Hell it self can furnish! He has no Offers to make me, but such as, wretched as I am, I'd sooner die than accept. — She vented her Passion in many such like Expressions, but neither the steady Calmness which had appeared in her Countenance, during the whole time of their removing her Goods, nor the Agonies this last Surprize had thrown her in, were of any Force to give a Turn to her Condition; she was in the hands of Persons who are not much accustomed to Remorse, or if by Chance sometimes a little touch'd with it, know how to give a check to Sentiments so contrary to their Profession; she was obliged to go with them to the House of Don PEDRO, where their Commission being ended, she was left in the Care of some of his Servants; for neither he, nor his Son, were in the way, or at least would not appear till the first Emotions of her Passion were a little abated. But there is a vast difference between those People who are incens'd at every little Accident that happens to thwart their Inclinations, and those whose Passions are not to be raised but on some extraordinary Occasion; — the first as they are immediately angry, so they are immediately reconciled.

The Untimely DISCOVERY. II

ciled; but the others, when once provok'd, are for a long time, if ever they are prevail'd on, in the same Humour. Of this last Sort was EMANUELLA; there was scarce a Probability, that had Don PEDRO recanted, and presently restored her to her Liberty with the Treasures he had so unjustly seiz'd, that she would ever have been brought to forgive the Affront he had put upon her: Nor indeed, can I see why she should; for tho' the World is apt to give to such a Disposition the Epithets of *Malicious* and *Revengeful*, yet as there is certainly a Justice due to our selves as well as to others, in my Opinion to renew a Friendship with a Person whose Unworthiness or Baseness has once forfeited it, is to put it in his power a second time to deceive us, and no other than joining in our own Destruction. Don PEDRO, however, did not make the tryal, but persisting in the Outrage he had begun, prepared a Room for her, little different from those in a common Goal; the Windows of it were grated, and the Door always kept close lock'd, except when any Person came in to bring her Meats: nor was her Attendance more respectful, he denied her to be waited on by one of her own Sex; fearing, as she was afterwards inform'd, her Tears and eloquent Manner of expressing her Misfortunes might influence them to pity her Condition, so far as to attempt her Relief. — She had the Priviledge of indulging her Melancholy undisturbed for two Days, at the end of which Don PEDRO, imagining the Violence of her Fury pretty well exhausted, went to make her a Visit. But to what a height does the Sight of the Offender transport the rush'd Disorders? EMANUELLA, whose Philosophy had enabled her to bear the Treatment she had met with much more Moderation than the generality of the World could have done, and depended entirely on Heaven for the Redress of her Injuries, now lost

12 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

all Patience; she upbraided him in Terms, which if not severe enough for the Baseness he had been guilty of, yet in such bitter ones, that she herself thought afterwards were unbecoming the Mildness of her Sex; and indeed, she had so great an Aversion for Railing, that she has been often heard to say, no Usage could excuse it: — And 'tis certain, the Edge of her Invectives had been much less keen, if Don PEDRO, to his other Crime, had not in this Visit offer'd an additional Indignity, which to the Delicacy of her Soul was less pardonable than his former ones. His earthy and groveling Disposition, rendering him incapable of judging of the Elegance of her's, made him affront her when he meant quite otherwise: Among some other faint Excuses for what he had done, he told her, that he had no other way to force her to marry his Son, — but as soon as ever she consented to that, she should not only be put in Possession of all, the Care of ALVAREZ had heaped up for her, but also of Treasures, which in no other Match she could expect. Not the poor Cottage Maid, who on the Mountain Tops, expos'd to Winter's Colds, and Summer's Heats, watches her little Flock, nor knows what Grandeur means, had less of Pride than EMANUELLA; yet here, the new, and ne'er till now experienced Guest usurp'd the whole Dominion o'er her Soul, and fir'd each Faculty with generous Scorn — Wretch (*cry'd she*) who ignorant of Merit, and far incapable of judging by what the Noble Mind is sway'd, thou thinkest all Dispositions like thy own, and conscious of thy own Depravity of Nature, hast dar'd to hope thou hast the means to force, or bribe me to thy Purpose; — but know, presuming Fool, I view thy executed Spite, and proffer'd Love with equal Eyes, and think them both below my Anger, and fit Subjects only for Disdain. She spoke much more to the same purpose, but Don PEDRO knowing how entirely he had

The Untimely DISCOVERY. 13

had her in his Power, was not at all mov'd at it, and doubted not but in a little time, when she found there was no other Possibility of regaining her Liberty, she would recede from her pretent Haughtiness of Disposition: He did not fail to let her know what his Thoughts were on this Occasion, and expressed them in a Fashion so insulting, that it encreased her Rage; 'till finding all she could say ineffectual to bring him to any just Sense of the Villany he was guilty, or to make him see how improbable it was she should ever be brought to yield to what he desired by such Methods, she at length desisted, and resolved to speak to him no more. 'Tis probable the old Don was a little nettled at her Behaviour, but he made no shew of it; and only telling her, if she would not be persuaded to become his Daughter, he should take care to be so far a Father to her, as to secure her Person and Fortune from being lavish'd away on a worse Choice, took his Leave. If a Condition such as hers could admit of any Happiness, it was at seeing him depart — the Sight of him was justly detestable to her, and the more so, because being an utter Enemy to Passion, she was almost as ready to condemn herself for the Extravagancies it made her guilty of, as he who had occasioned it: Nothing could be more exemplary than her manner of supporting this Confinement, the Excellence of her Principles made her think it a Crime to *revile* even her greatest Enemies, and the Greatness of her Spirit, from any mean Complainings of her ill Fortune: the Servant who was appointed to attend her, protested he never saw her weep, nor utter the least irregular Word; not that she was insensible of her Misfortunes; not the most repining Mortal, perhaps, ever felt any thing so nearly: being cut off, in all probability for ever, from all the Pleasures her Youth and Inclinations rendered her susceptible of. — To be robb'd of all that Grandeur she was bred

14 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

to, — to be denied the Conversation of her Friends, — shut up from all Society, — and in the Power of a Man, whose Actions testified him to be the greatest of Villains, one who doubtless would never let her appear in the World again, for fear of being call'd to an Account for what he had done; — one who, 'twas possible, if she yielded not to his Proposal, might, to secure her Fortune, at last contrive her Death: — These were terrible Reflections for so young a Creature, yet I question, by the account I have of her, if the most tenacious of our Philosophers would have bore them with that Resignation she did.

ABOUT a Month was past in this Confinement, during which time she had seen no human Face but the Servant, and Don PEDRO once; for neither his Wife, nor Don MARCO ever had presumed to come into her Presence, which tho' she was very glad of, she could not help wondering at, not doubting at her first coming there but she should be continually persecuted with the Declarations of him whom her ill Fortune had made her Lover: but she gave her self not much Trouble what should be the meaning of it, amusing her self as well as she could with Adventures she had formerly read of; for her cruel Jaylor now denied her the Satisfaction of Books. As she was sitting one Morning pretty early in her usual Meditations, she perceived a Paper lying close to the Door; she started up, and going to take it, perceived by part of it being still under the Door, that it had been thrust in by some Body after it was shut: It was impossible but the most incurious in such a Circumstance would have been desirous of seeing what it contained, and hastily opening it, she found it was directed to herself, and contained these Lines:

To



TO Donna E M A N U E L L A.

I Heartily lament the unjust Calamity you, suffer, but Pity being a poor Consolation, have forbore to give you any Instance of it, till I had the power of testifying it by something more than Words. — If you have Courage enough to trust your self with a Person you know not, you will find more Honour than in those you have confided. — I have provided Means for your Escape, if you think fit to accept it; which let me know by a Line this Night when all the Family are in Bed. — I know you are denied the use of Pen and Ink; but if you can contrive to let a String down from your Window, I will be underneath and fasten one to it, which shall easily go in between the Grate, and by that means I may also receive your Answer, which I will wait the writing of. — Depend that I have no other View in attempting to serve you, than what is consistent with the strictest Honour, whose Votary I profess my self, and the injured E M A N U E L L A's

Unknown Servant.

P. S. Three distinct Whistles, about two Minutes each time, shall be the Signal for you to let down the String.

THE Surprise E M A N U E L L A was in at reading this, cannot be well express'd; she was sensible there were a great many in the Island, who would make this Offer, if by any means they could have known the Need she had of their Service; but then the Improbability there was that Don P E D R O should let the Truth of this Affair reach the Ear of any

16 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

any one, and much more that they should have an Opportunity of coming into his House, and conveying this Letter under the Door of her Chamber, quite stagger'd her Conjecture: she could not help, however, believing that it was best for her to accept it, since no Condition could be worse than what she was in at present; and if the Person who pretended to so much Honour should have Principles never so different from it, she thought it would be in her power to make a much better Defence at Liberty, and in an open Street, than she could do in this Confinement, in case DON MARCO (which she was in daily Apprehensions of) should ever make any Attempts on her Honour. Resolv'd therefore, to send an Answer of Consent, she felt a greater Impatience for the approach of Night than yet she had ever known for any Event: At last it came, and between the Hours of Twelve and One she heard the wish'd-for Signal: she had tied her Girdle and Garters together to make a long String ready, which on the third Whistle she immediately let down, and with it drew up a little Standish with a Sheet of Paper roll'd up in it, so careful was the Person that no Material should be wanting; she did not delay the use it was convey'd for, but fill'd it in a moment with these Lines:



To the generous Offerer of Life, Liberty, and Deliverance from a thousand Evils.

I Will not give my self leave to suspect you any other than you seem, lest I should by a needless Fear, render my self incapable of accepting what you so kindly offer, and justify me, in what future Mischiefs may

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may besal me,—— I glndly embrace your Proposition, and am ready to do any thing to get free.—— I wish you had acquainted me with what Methods I should take, for I can scarce believe there is a Possibility for me to Escape: If there be, I beg the Knowledge may not be deferr'd.—— As you have been too generous to let me know what Reward you expect for so meritorious an Action; I will not pretend to offer any, since it is only in the power of Heaven to make a Retribution suitable to such exalted Virtue; and as that, I am willing to hope, is your only Aim, so that it may be immediately bestow'd in all the choicest Blessings of that eternal Store-House, shall be the incessant Prayers of,

The (beyond Expression) obliged

EMANUELLA.

P. S. The Moon shines to-night with an unusual Splendor, I believe by her favourable Beams you will have Light enough to answer my Impatience with some little Hints by what Means I am to be preserved: If you can without Danger of being observed, I beg you will favour me so far; and that you may do so, I let down your Standish, and let the String continue, which I will not draw up till you give a Signal that you have no further Occasion for it.

No Whistle being given, she imagin'd he was about to do as she desir'd, and would very fain if possible have seen him, but the Grate was too narrow for her to put her Head through: In a very little time she heard the Whistle, and pulling up the Ribband, found there was a Letter fix'd to it, which contain'd these Lines:

To

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TO DONNA EMANUELLA.

THE Place I am in not being so private as I could wish, to particularize the Account you desire, I entreat you will be satisfied with knowing there is a Way found out to convey the Key of your Prison by the same Means you receive this — ; when it comes to your Hands, it will be also accompanied with a little Ladder made of Silk Cords, and you have no more to do than to unlock your Door, and go into a Room adjoining to it, which you will find open, and a Window that looks into a Field, whence you may easily descend, and at the bottom find him who will be ready to conduct you where you please, and always glad of an Opportunity to prove how very much he is

Your most humble Servant,

P. S. I believe you will have the Ladder and Key to-morrow Night, — therefore do not neglect to watch the Signal.

IF EMANUELLA was before confounded in her Conjectures who it should be that appeared so assiduous to deliver her, she was now much more so ; the Key of the Door assur'd her it must be by the Assistance of some Person in the House she was to be befriended : but all the Guesses she could make, seeming improbable, she contented her self to wait the Certainty and the Probability that the worst part of her Misfortune, her Confinement, was near an end, gave her hopes that she should also find Justice to remedy the others also ; and she pass'd the remainder of that Night and the ensuing

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ing Day in Contemplations much more tranquil than she had known since she had been in that House.

THE next Night, much about the same Hour, or something later, she heard the Sound she was not a little impatient for; and letting down the String, found it came up with a weight which told her before she saw it, what she expected had not fail'd her: she received both the Ladder and Key, to which was fix'd a little piece of Paper in which was writ these Words:

This Moment is the Crisis of your Fate—; be careful not to lose it—unlock your Door as softly as you can, and go into a Chamber on the left Hand, there is a Balcony to which you may fix your Ladder;—do not mistake the Room, nor take any Lights with you—there are Horses to carry you where you shall command.

IT was not without some little Apprehensions this distressed Lady was about to put her self in the power of a Person unknown, at such an Hour, and one who she found had Conveniency to carry her where he pleased, tho' he made her the Compliment of leaving it to her own Choice; but the Exigence of her Affairs, the cruel Restraint she was under, and the Probability of greater Evils, presently banish'd them, and she unlock'd the Door, and in every thing obeyed Directions. The Balcony was so low, that she might almost have jumped from it to the Ground; but the Gentleman who had taken so much pains to serve her, ordered every thing as commodious as possible. She found three Men on Horseback, one of which alighting, lifted her up behind another, and as soon as he was remounted himself, desired her to say where they should conduct her.—The Terror she had been in for fear of Discovery while she was in the House, the Confusion

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fusion to think she was in the Hands of Strangers, and the Uncertainty to which of her Acquaintance coming in that Hour, and Manner, and the rest of her History, would be the least liable to Censure, made her unable to reply; which one of them perceiving, said to the others, The Lady may by her late Disorders be perhaps, at present, incapable of determining on any thing; 'tis therefore best to ride some distance from hence, no matter which way, to prevent Discovery, till the Power of Consideration is a little return'd to her. EMANUELLA, willing to be farther from DON PEDRO, assented, and they all went five or six Miles without stopping or speaking to each other; a little House in which there was a Light seem'd to invite them to bait at it, and it being proposed, she having put her self so far into their Power, thought it would discover a ridiculous Distrust to scruple bearing them Company into it; and beside, she hoped her Curiosity would be satisfied, by discovering to whom it was she was indebted for her Delivery, for they were all muffled in their Cloaks, that it was impossible for her to know whether she had ever seen them before or not; she had ask'd the Person she rode behind, but he excused himself by telling her, that he but obey'd his Principal in what he had done, and without his Leave could not discover any thing. This Secrecy a little alarm'd her, but she was infinitely more so when being come into the House, one of the Persons who she observ'd had never spoke one Word during the whole time of their little Journey, came into the Room, and making a Sign to the others to withdraw, threw off his Cloak, and discovered himself to be DON MARCO. Astonishment, and Rage, and Fear at once possess'd her—she could not imagine for what Reason he had acted in this manner, unless it was contriv'd so, that in flying the Cruelty of
the

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the *Father*, she should run into the Danger of a more shocking Treatment from the Son. — But she had not time to utter any part of what she thought, before, falling on his Knees, he accosted her in this Manner: I see Madam, *said he*, with what Regret you find your self under some Obligation to any of the Family of Don PEDRO; but to convince you that Nearness of Blood does not always occasion a Conformity of Principles, be pleased to accept of this little part of what has been so unjustly taken from you, and believe that MARCO will never rest till the whole is again at your disposal. In speaking these Words he presented her with a little Amber Box, in which she had been used to keep her Jewels; which opening, she found it still contain'd them, and also Bills to a great Value. 'Tis hard to say whether she was amazed, or pleased, at so unexpected a piece of Generosity. The Esteem she formerly had for him, which by the late Behaviour of his Father, in which she imagined he had an equal Share, had been converted into as great an Aversion, now return'd with added Vigour, and she rejoiced as much to find she had not been deceived in her first Sentiments of his Virtues, as in the Advantage she receiv'd from them; she expressed herself so obligingly on this Occasion, that Don MARCO, who had the most sincere and disinterested Affection for her that ever was, could not listen to her without feeling a Rapture perhaps superior to that which some who call themselves Lovers are capable of knowing, even in the Gratification of their utmost Wishes. I tremble, Madam, *said he*, to appear before you, knowing well, that without a Goodness near Divine, the little Service I have now been able to do you, joined with that of my whole future Life, is far too small to engage Forgiveness for the Wrongs you have received from my Family; and should not have

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have presumed to discover my self, had not your uncertainty how to bestow your self in safety, obliged me to bring you to this House. You would then, *answer'd she*, have been guilty of a great Injustice to your self, and Unkindness to me; for to be obliged in so profuse a manner, and be ignorant where to pay our Acknowledgments, is, to a grateful Soul, a Pain: — Besides, I feel so great a Satisfaction in the Knowledge, that when I entertain'd a Friendship from Don MARCO, I err'd not in my Choice, that I know not if I could easily have pardon'd the delaying of it. — Be assur'd, I cannot resent the Usage I have met from Don PEDRO with half that Warmth and Spirit, as I shall endeavour to repay my Obligations to his Son; and that the Virtues of the latter have entirely disarm'd me from taking that Revenge, which the Vices of the other would else have demanded. Oh! I know, resumed Don MARCO, I know you are too heavenly good, to wish Revenge; — but do not, I beseech you, do not let the Memory of what I have done, nor the Belief how much more I would do, were it in my power, make you forget what is owing to your self. — Use all proper means to oblige my cruel Father to restore to you what he has so unjustly taken from you; for much I fear he will not be prevail'd upon by gentle means to deal with Honour by you.

THIS generous Contest lasted for some Time, nor would Don MARCO give it over, till she had promised to endeavour to do herself Justice; for the Atainment of which, both thought it the most effectual Way for her to pursue her Intention of going to *Madrid*, not only because if she continu'd where she was, Don PEDRO's Artifice might possibly find her out, and contrive some Stratagem again to get her in his power, but also that the King was the only Person who had the Means of redres-

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redressing her Grievances. He would needs accompany her thither, attended by the two Men whom he had brought to assist her in her Escape; but she opposed it, telling him she had already received too many Obligations to endure the Thought of laying herself under more: However, on his representing the Dangers which of consequence must attend a Person of her Sex in so long a Voyage alone, and also the Necessity there was for him to abscond for some time from the Rage of Don PEDRO, who 'twas probable would be raised to the highest Pitch, on the Discovery how his Designs had been circumvented by the very Person for whose sake they had been form'd; she was at last persuaded, it would not only be extremely commodious for her, but also far from inconvenient for him; and since his absenting himself from his Father was absolutely necessary, it was as well for him to take a Voyage to *Madrid*, as any other Place. This being concluded on, Don MARCO advis'd their immediate Departure, judging it not safe to remain on the Island after Day-Break, if by any means they could leave it sooner; because he knew that in the Morning the Fellow who had the Charge of the Key which he had stole, would discover the Theft, and EMANUELLA's Escape. One of the Men was therefore immediately dispatch'd to the Sea-side, which they were not above three Miles distant from, to see if there was a Ship ready to go off, and to agree for the Passage. By good Fortune there was one, which on a more than ordinary Gratification, comply'd with their desire of hoisting Sail as soon as they came on board. 'Twould be needless to say with how much Pleasure EMANUELLA heard this News; the ardent Desire she had to leave a place which had so little in it agreeable to her Genius, joined to the late ill Treatment she had met with, and the Apprehension of being subjected to the
same

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same again, is sufficient to make the Reader sensible with what a Welcome she receiv'd the Certainty of going.

AN Infinity of Contentment sat smiling on her Countenance all the time of their Voyage; a fair Wind, kindly Gales, and an unruffled Sea, waisted her smoothly to her desired Port. — No chilling Fears from *within* — No Omens from *without* — No secret Warning from her Guardian Angel, gave a Check to the Satisfaction she felt at landing on that fatal Shore where all her Peace of Mind was to be wreck'd! where Mischiefs multiplied, concealed in Clouds — numberless, nameless Ills — attended her Approach, ready to burst with all their hoarded Venom on her Head.

SHE went immediately to the House of Don JABIN, a very near Relation; where having made herself known, and the Particulars of her late Adventure, she was receiv'd with the highest Demonstrations of Kindness — Both he and his Wife assured her they would introduce her to the King, who would doubtless do her Justice as to the Recovery of that part of her Fortune which was still in the possession of Don PEDRO; and also issue out his Orders for the Punishment so base an Action deserv'd: But this not being done immediately, by reason of his Majesty being at that time at the *Escorial*, from which he did not return so soon as was expected; an Incident entirely unforeseen gave a sudden and vexatious Turn to this Affair, and instead of being *Plaintiff*, reduced her to the State of a *Defendant*.

THE cunning Don PEDRO had no sooner discover'd her Escape, than he immediately guess'd to what place she was gone; and not doubting but she would take such Measures as could end in no less than his Ruin, had it presently in his Head, how to preserve himself, and lay the Odium on her: His Son being fled with her, and some few
Bills

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Bills he had taken from him to support himself in his Absence, as well as what of right belong'd to EMANUELLA, furnish'd him with Hints, which the prompting Fiend that animated his inventive Brain, took care to improve to form a Story so plausible, that when heard, he should appear the only injured Person, and EMANUELLA, and his Son (whom now he hated) be esteemed no other than Wretches who had contriv'd together to rob him. Full of this inhuman Stratagem, and accompanied by some vile Creatures, whose Evidence he had purchas'd, as well as Bonds, Notes, and Bills, counterfeiting the dead ALVAREZ's Hand and Seal, he was at *Madrid* almost as soon as those he follow'd : and being inform'd his Majesty was at the *Escorial*, he waited not his coming to *Madrid* ; but as Vice is always more indefatigable in the pursuit of what it aims at, than a sincere and honest Meaning, he went to wait on him there : And his Age and artful Manner of insinuating what he would have believ'd, wrought so far on the Royal Ear, as to gain him the promise of having it in his power to inflict what Punishment he pleased on the Fugitives, who the cruel Politician had taken care to inform himself where they might be found, before he deliver'd his Petition, tho' he concealed himself from either of them.

NOTHING therefore of his Arrivall being suspected; till the News of the King's Return, put Don JABIN in mind that his Cousin should make her Appeal ; and she was dressing herself to accompany him to Court, when a Messenger from thence came to demand her Appearance. The Surprize of so unlook'd-for a Summons, put them all in a Consternation ; and Don MARCO, who tho he did not lodge there, pass'd most of his Hours with them, and was at that time present, discover'd in his Countenance a Horror which extreamly added to it. He was not ignorant of the thousand

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Artifices his Father was ever Master of, when he was zealous for the Accomplishment of any Design, and fear'd it was by some Emissaries employ'd by him, tho' he was far from imagining he was there himself, that something had been done to pervert that Justice he might very well believe EMANUELLA would claim. He would very fain have persuaded her to suffer him to wait on her, that in case it were as he suspected, he might be a Witness on her Side, against whatever false Suggestions should be offered to her Disadvantage; but that generous Lady would by no means be prevailed on to permit him. She told him she had not the least Fear of making a Defence against all that Malice could form to hurt her; and that she could not consent a Person she call'd Friend, and one who so justly had merited the Title from her, should put so great a Constraint on himself, and endure a Shame so poinant, as must rise from the Accusation of a Parent, tho' never so unworthy a one. She express'd herself in Terms so absolute, that Don MARCO, tho' with a world of Reluctance, was obliged to obey: and accompanied by Don JABIN, his Lady, and the two Servants, who came over with her, and whom it was necessary should appear, she went with a Courage infinitely beyond what could be expected from her Sex and Years; and wholly relying on the Justice of her Cause, and the Care of Heaven, was farther from any dread of the Event, than those to whom it was of less Concern.

N O T but when she was conducted into the Palace, and brought before the King, she was a little alarm'd to see the base Don PEDRO there: she had however Presence enough of Mind to conceal those little Emotions, which she was unable to repel at so unexpected an Interview, and after having paid her Duty to the Royal Presence, If I were not already too well acquainted, *said she*, with your Insolence

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lence in maintaining the Injuries you do, I should have hope, Repentance for those you have offered me, had brought you here, so contrary to my Expectation, to make me that Restitution, you might be sure I should endeavour to force you to. There was not a Person in this Assembly, which was very numerous, most of the Nobility being come to congratulate his Majesty on his Return, who the Appearance of EMANUELLA, and the Sweetness which accompanied her Accents, assur'd as they were, did not win to her Interest.——The King himself seem'd to regard her with an uncommon Stedfastness, as surpriz'd at the Graces which attended her; and already suspicious of the Truth of what had been suggested against her; which the watchful PEDRO observing, throwing himself at his Feet, O my Sovereign! *said he*, if this Woman's Soul had any Affinity with her exterior Charms, she would at least have had Modesty sufficient to have shun'd the awful Justice of this Place——But I entreat you by that extensive Power which makes Kings Gods on Earth, and by that sacred Regard which to the King of Kings, even from your self, is due!——By Honour, Pity, Justice, by your own Royal Promise, I conjure you not to listen to the false Insinuations of this artful *Siren*, who comes no doubt prepared with well-dress'd Perjuries, and smooth Hypocrisy to evade her Crimes, and turn the Sword of Vengeance against me. 'Twould be very hard to describe any part of what pass'd in the Soul of the injur'd EMANUELLA all the time he was speaking in this manner; scarce could she restrain the struggling Passions, which swell'd almost to bursting in her Breast, and press'd so hard for Vent, 'tis probable no Consideration would have been of force to have with-held them, had not the King with a Countenance somewhat perplex'd, commanded him to be silent, telling him

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Justice should be severely executed on which ever Party should be found the Guilty — Don JABIN then, tho' very much confus'd at so strange a Character of his Relation, thought it was his Time to speak, and begg'd to know of what she was accus'd? To which his Majesty assenting, commanded a Person appointed for that purpose to read the Heads of the Charge against her, as they were taken from the Mouth of her Impeacher; which he presently obey'd, and with a loud Voice surpriz'd all who had not heard it before, with the Contents of a Paper which he pulled out of his Pocket, and were as follows :

A brief Abstract of the Crimes alledged against Donna EMANUELLA, Daughter to Don ALVAREZ, late Governour of *Porto-Rico*, an Island in that part of his most Catholick Majesty's Dominions, entitled the *Spanish-West-Indies*: Attested by Don PEDRO, and a great Number of other Gentlemen upon Oath.

I.

That the said Donna EMANUELLA, being privy to the borrowing several large Sums of Money from Don PEDRO, by her Father; she, after his Death, not only deny'd the Payment of them, but also pretended there was much more owing to her from the said Don PEDRO.

II.

That she seduc'd the Principles of Don MARCO, the only Son of Don PEDRO, and living with him in a riotous and dissolute manner, soon wasted the little Wealth left her by Don ALVAREZ; on which having recourse to Don PEDRO for a Supply, and being refus'd by him, she hir'd Assassins to murder him, which he very narrowly escap'd.

III.

That being, by the Order of the Magistrates of the Place, on Don PEDRO's Complaint, taken into Custody,

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study, and afterwards, by his Compassion and Charity, preserv'd from being carried to Prison, and taken into his own House on her seeming Repentance; she most ungratefully and wickedly contriv'd with his own Son to rob him, which they did, and made their Escape together to Madrid, with the Value of 5000 Crowns in Jewels, Bills and Money.

So heavy an Accusation, loaden with so many aggravating Circumstances, was sufficient to have shock'd the most establish'd Fortitude; but EMANUELLA was of that sort of Spirit, which exalts it self the most, when most it is oppress'd: She seem'd rather fuller of Disdain than Anger, while she listned to the invective Scroll; and when she saw Amazement sit on every Face, and those of her own Blood confounded, and unable to offer any thing in her Defence, she thus undertook to plead for herself. Wonder not, Royal Sir! *said she*, that conscious of my perfect Innocence, and of a Soul too nice to bear such rude Suspicions, as this monstrous Legend may perhaps create, should lodge a Moment in the Breasts of any here; I now not wait the dull Formalities of Law, nor ask Advice from learned Council drawn, but here presume to make my own Defence, unaided but by Truth—Permit me then, great King! to unfold a Story must make my vile Accuser's Heart grow cold within him, tho' warm'd with all the Fires of Hell. She stop'd at these Words, by a beseeching Air expecting his Permission to proceed; which being granted, she related the whole Affair with the greatest Truth and Exactness, neither extenuating her Enemy's Inhumanity, nor diminishing the smallest Tittle of her own Behaviour. Don PEDRO and his Accomplices, attempted to interrupt her several times, but they were commanded to be silent, and she was indulg'd in all the freedom she could desire in vindicating her.

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herself, and accusing him. When she had finish'd what she had to say, and the Witnesses she brought with her examin'd, there were many, who, confident of her Sincerity, spoke in her Behalf, but it avail'd but little. Don PEDRO's continued Asservations, the Number of his Evidences, and the Advantage of complaining first, was very near carrying the Cause against her; when Don MARCO, impatient that they stay'd, and full of fears, which were indeed prophetick, left the House of Don JABIN, and came with all speed to the Palace: Partly by Persuasions, and partly by Force, he got through the Guards, and entered the Room of Audience just as his Father was entreating Sentence might be past on EMANUELLA. Distracted with what he saw and heard, he ran up to the Chair of State, and begg'd it might be suspended 'till he was heard. The King, whose Sentiments were yet unfix'd, gave him leave to utter what he had to say; and deaf to all other Considerations but those of clearing her, he wildly spoke every thing he knew, and not only confirm'd all EMANUELLA had averr'd, but many more Particulars, of which she was ignorant, concerning his Father's Barbarity; and among the rest, that he really had a Design to murder her, the surer to secure her Fortune; which horrid Deed had certainly been perpetrated, had he not timely contrived the Means of her Escape. But all that he could urge, was in vain; the King had been so much prepossess'd by Don PEDRO of a criminal Correspondence between him and that Lady, that all he said appeared but as the Effects of Gallantry to save a *Mistress*, who, considering her Attractions, and the Misfortunes of his own Form, it was no wonder he should risque every thing for. But, with what Words can so unexampled a Generosity be prais'd! — Perceiving his Zeal to serve, had rather work'd a contrary Effect; the noble-

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noble-minded MARCO resolv'd to give a fatal Proof of his Sincerity, once more addressing himself to his Majesty; Since that bad Man, who gave me Being, *said he*, prefers a little shining Dirt to Honour, Truth and Justice, and still persists in his Design of ruining an innocent Virgin entrusted to his Care: Thus! *continued he*, (drawing his Sword, and falling on it, before any one cou'd be quick enough to prevent him) — Thus! I release myself of the Duty of a Son. — Thus! clear myself of the Crimes he has accus'd me of — and Thus! I hope, convince your sacred Majesty, and the yet unbelieving World, that it contains not a Jewel of more worth than EMANUELLA! — Hear, and believe me, Royal Sir! tho' long, long I have ador'd the charming Maid, conscious of my own Defects, I ne'er presum'd to wound her Ears with the unwelcome Tale; nor would I, 'till my last Moment, have ventur'd on the Declaration, lest she should have *hated*, what I'm too well assur'd she never cou'd have *lov'd*. — If what I now have done, be an Offence to Heaven, I hope you will all supplicate my Pardon: for be assur'd, cou'd I have liv'd with Honour, or with Peace, I had not died so early; but thus, miserable in all, traduced by him, who ought to have been the Protector of my Fame, justly despis'd by her I wish'd to please, what could I do, but — He could no more; he had given the Wound with such a force, Death found an easy Passage to his Heart, and soon deprived him of the Power of Utterance. The King seemed prodigiously alarmed at so uncommon a Testimony of Affection. The Nobles look'd on one another, struck with a sudden Horror. EMANUELLA forgot her own Misfortunes to lament the untimely Fate of so deserving a Youth. But Don PEDRO, who, tho' he stood still and motionless for some time, as the Son's Barbarity had de-

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prived

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prived him of, yet his hurrying Thoughts were busy enough within, and turn'd all his Soul into Confusion.—Long sleeping Conscience rous'd itself at length, and Self-Conviction, Remorse, and all the Horrors of Desperation at once invaded him. The wild Disorder scorning to prey on any of the meaner Faculties, mounted to the Brain, whirling Reflection from her Chain of Causes, and quite disjointed Reason. In this sudden Frenzy he uttered enough to make all that heard him sensible of his Guilt; and the King, rightly judging the Cause by the Effect, order'd him to be taken away and secur'd till Time should discover more. The Persons, who had appear'd Confederates in his Design, were sent to the *Inquisition*, there to be instructed in the Pains which perjur'd Wretches like themselves are doom'd to bear in another World; and EMANUELLA, and her Friends, dismiss'd with those Encômiums which her modest, but courageous Behaviour merited, and a Promise given by the King's own Mouth, that he would send an immediate Order for the bringing over all that Don PEDRO had so unjustly seiz'd.

THIS Adventure engross'd the whole Discourse of the Town for a great while; and those who were entirely Strangers to the Person of EMANUELLA, were perfectly well acquainted with her by Report. It is most certain, that her Virtues being rendred by this publick Notice more conspicuous, gain'd her a much greater number of Admirers than otherwise she would have had, if she had been no more seen, nor known than the *Spanish* Ladies ordinarily are; but then the same Reason created also an adequate proportion of Detractors. It is impossible to be remarkably distinguish'd, without being as remarkably envied and hated, especially by those of the same Sex; those who found the greatest Improvement in her Conversation,

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tion, and whom she most instructed in any of those numerous Accomplishments, in which she excell'd, secretly wish'd her less capable of affording it; and those to whom she would not be seen, as finding nothing in them worthy of her Friendship, made it their whole Study, by all the little Artifices they were Mistresses of, to lessen the brightness of a Character whose Radiency discover'd the Imperfections of their own; but hers was too well establish'd for any of the Plots laid against her to succeed, and she was so universally applauded by all the knowing part of the World, that it was sufficient to be accounted well thought of by her, to engage the Reputation of being a fine Woman — There were a great many, therefore, who endeavour'd an Intimacy with her in no other View; aiming only at the Character, and neglecting the real Advantages which even those who had been the least indebted either to Nature or Education, might have found in an Acquaintance with her. Nor did her Charity, and Generosity of Disposition, extend only to the embellishing the *Minds* of those to whom she profess'd a Friendship; she could not think a worthy Person under any Distress, without preventing their Requests, by offering every thing in her Power to serve them: And tho' the Fortune she was at present possess'd of (till Don PEDRO had restor'd her the much greater part still in his Hands) would not allow very conveniently of such Liberalities; yet she made Presents, which by their Magnificence, had the Receivers been ignorant from whom they came, would rather have been imagin'd to flow from the Purse of a Princess, than that of a private Gentlewoman. Donna BERILLA, youngest Daughter to her Cousin Don JABIN, experienced her Bounty this way; for being condemned much against her Inclinations to a Nunnery (as in *Spain*, where a *Grande* has a

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numerous Family, and not an equal Affluence of Wealth, rather than match them below their Birth, 'tis common to bestow one or more of them in that manner, where for eight or nine hundred Crowns they are provided for, for their Lives) the generous EMANUELLA never left soliciting her Father to suspend his Design, till she should receive the remainder of her Fortune, as the King had promised she should; assuring him, that she would add to what he must be obliged to give to place her in a Cloister, as much as would make her equal to what he design'd for her other Sisters.—Don JABIN was very loth to accept of what she offer'd; telling her it was not only a much greater Favour than he was willing to accept, but also a Sum beyond what she could conveniently spare; but she stopp'd his Mouth, begging him to believe the Company of BERILLIA was cheaply purchased at that Rate; and that for his other Objection, she would easily make it up, by retrenching Expences, less pleasing to herself than that would be.

THIS young Lady, so highly obliged to EMANUELLA for this Proof of her Friendship, one would think should never have obliterated the Memory of it; but what Engagements are of force to bind a Thankless and Ungrateful Mind! The Aversion she had for a monastick Life, was soon discover'd by the penetrating Eyes of her Cousin, to proceed from her too great Affection for a young Fop, who had nothing to recommend him to the Approbation of a Woman of Discretion; and talking to her with a little more warmth than was usual on this Occasion, the other resented it, as tho' she took that Liberty on the account of what she had promised to her Father, and from that Moment conceiv'd so great a Hatred, that it grew uneasy to herself, because she had no Opportunity to make the other feel the Effects of it—

But

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But being naturally as cunning as revengeful, she conceal'd her Sentiments, and under the Mask of Friendship, watch'd all her Actions, still hoping some unguarded Minute might arrive, in which she should be able to discover something to expose her for. But not all her Dilligence could furnish what she wanted; EMANUELLA, among the multiplicity of her Adorers, behav'd herself in such a manner, that might defy the strictest Scrutiny — all her Actions — all her Words — all her Looks; were govern'd by Prudence, and her malicious Observer began to think it would be but Labour lost to attempt to blast either her Virtue or Reputation. But alas! what Courage, what Discretion, what cool Reserve, what Sanctity of Wishes can defend the Heart, when once the God of Love has found an Entrance there! that Tyrant Passion lords it o'er the Mind, fills every Faculty, and leaves no room for any other Thought — drives Consideration far away — overturns Reflection — and permits no Image but itself to dwell in Fancy's Region. The soft and tender Soul of EMANUELLA, was a fit Temple for the enslaving Deity to work his utmost Wonders in; and that she no sooner felt his Power, was not because she was less susceptible than others of her Acquaintance, but that her Taste was more delicate, and so many different Perfections as were necessary to attract her Admiration, were very difficult to be found in one Man.

BUT Chance, or rather the Character of her Charms, at last, brought a Person to her sight so conformable to the *Idea* she had created in her Mind, of what would please her, that she could not presently distinguish whether it was still the same delightful Vision her extensive Fancy had dress'd up with all the Ornaments of Art and Nature, or a real Substance. This most lovely, this accomplish'd Gentleman, was call'd EMILIUS, a young

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young *Roman Count*, who, having visited almost all the Courts of *Europe*, happen'd at this time to be at *Madrid*. He heard talk of *EMANUELLA*, as of the greatest Wonder there; and having seen all the other Curiosities, could not be satisfied to leave the Place, without first being an Eye-witness of those Perfections, which Fame so lavishly reported. The *Carnival* coming on, he had hope the Freedom of the Diversions used in that Season, might afford him an Opportunity he long had vainly languish'd for: Nor was he deceived. *EMANUELLA*, who had not been accustomed to those severe Restrictions of Behaviour the *Spanish Jealousy* obliges the Females of their Family to observe, was glad to lay hold of all Opportunities to indulge the natural Gaiety of her Humour; and accompanied by *Donna BERILLIA*, and other Ladies of her Acquaintance, took part in all the innocent Liberties the time allow'd. As they were on their Rambles one Day, the watchful *Count*, having Intelligence to whose House they were going, found means to be introduced to the Master of it: There happened to be a great Assembly of Gentlemen and Ladies; but presently informing himself which was *EMANUELLA*, he singled her out; and in entertaining her, it was difficult to say whether he gave, or receiv'd the greater Pleasure. She thought she had never seen any thing so agreeable and witty, and he found her so far surpassing all the Descriptions had been made him, that tho' he had arm'd himself with all the Resolution he was Master, of to regard her only with *Admiration*, a tenderer Passion, in spite of him, soon took up all his Soul.—He could not gaze, without admiring; nor admire, without desiring: But tho' he found that he had very much receded from that Resolution he had form'd before he saw her, yet, till he saw her no more, he knew not how much—The height of Passion is never so truly experienced

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ced as in Absence — when from our longing Eyes, the dear-lov'd Prospect flies — and our transported Ears no more are blest — what *Sense* cannot bestow *Imagination's* Force supplies, and brings the Charmer to our ravish'd View — in spite of Distance, we see! we hear! we grasp the lovely Phantom, and taste, in *Theory*, ten thousand Joys; till *Reason*, envious of the airy Blifs, chafes the bright *Ideas* from our Minds, and shows us what we are.

IT was in these waking Dreams the amorous Count beguil'd the Pains of Absence; but he was too much of the Temper of his Sex to content himself without a Happiness more substantial: A perfect Knowledge of his own Attractions, and frequent Experience how little it was in the Power of any Woman to withstand the Influence of them, made him not despair of finding the same Sensibility in EMANUELLA as he had done in others; and imagined he wanted nothing but an Opportunity to acquaint her with his Passion, to inspire an equal one in her. The first Step therefore that he made towards the ingratiating himself, was to write; and, besides the being pretty much accustomed to such kind of *Billets*, the Passion he was at present fir'd with, help'd him to dictate one tender enough to make her believe he lov'd her, and too respectful, not to give her an Opinion, his Designs was accompanied with the strictest Honour. The Words were these:



To



To the Incomparable Donna *EMANUELLA*.

BEFORE I attempt to make known the impatient Dictates of my Soul, I would call all the Aids of Wit — of pity-moving Eloquence — and soft Persuasion, to inspire my Pen, and teach me Arts to which I am yet a Stranger: But that a secret Impulse from within, bids me beware — tells me, Sincerity disdains the Ornaments of Words, and looks most lovely in her naked Meaning — Yet dare I not proceed — O that my Guardian Angel — the Witness of my Sighs, my Tears, my long Endurings, my restless Days, and agonizing Nights, would leave his Charge one Moment, and gently whisper in your Ear how much I love — how much I suffer — At length the Secret is reveal'd — O wonderful Force of Passion! that while it drives, restrains, and speaks in Silence — I have confess'd I love — but, oh! what hope that you'll permit me to attest this Truth by all the Services of my future Life? — I have no Parents here, no Friend, no Merits to excuse this bold Presumption, and plead my Cause — but if *EMANUELLA* has a Penetration, such as her Eyes, and Wit, have persuaded me to think, that has already told her more in my behalf than any Tongue could utter. The wild Confusion in my Countenance — the Inconnexion of my Words, when all surpriz'd! astonish'd! at the Wonders of your Charms, I by a thousand ways betray'd my Sense of them the few Hours I had the Blessing of entertaining you, at the House of Don FRANCISCO — But I am too presuming — I fear the excellent *EMANUELLA*, so used to conquer, regarded not a Triumph so unworthy of her Observan
tio-

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tion — If so, I am indeed undone — but as 'tis natural to wish Pity for remediless Misfortunes, be so divinely good to allow me that ; and if you chance to hear of any unhappy Stranger, who falls a Martyr to Love's powerful Flame, know it is he who living or dying must be

Your everlasting Votary,

EMILIUS.

P. S. *As I have pass'd many Nights in Contemplation under your Window ; permit me to disturb an Hour's Repose of yours with the Musick this Evening about Twelve or One o'clock.*

IF what EMANUELLA felt from the first View of EMILIUS was not yet arrived to a Passion, it was enough to afford an infinity of Pleasure in receiving this ; which indeed, she was not without some secret Expectations of, having, as he judiciously enough observ'd, a Discernment which seldom deceiv'd her, and easily inform'd her the Emotions that appeared in his Face were occasion'd only by her Presence ; had she been as quick in discovering the Humours of her own Sex, she had escap'd the greatest part of the Misfortunes which soon after came upon her — But as intimate as she was with Donna BERRILLIA, she forbore to acquaint her with this Affair, not out of any suspicion she would betray it, or make any Conjecture to her Disadvantage ; but, that perceiving she still carried on an Amour with that young Spark already mentioned, she thought to acknowledge herself a Lover, would be to lessen the Prerogative she took in advising the other. When Night came, she was very much perplex'd how to get rid of her ; and not being willing she should stay till the Count came to the Window, made a Pretence of being a little indispos'd, and said she would go to Bed : But the officious

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officious Creature would not be so put off; and being of a suspicious Temper, presently imagin'd there was something more than ordinary in the Case, that made her Cousin, contrary to her Custom, so willing she should leave her; and besides, she fancied she had been more thoughtful of late than usual: Therefore putting all this together, she resolv'd, if possible, to find out the meaning of it; and imagining that this Night might produce something which would tend to a Discovery, she stir'd not from the Chamber; under colour of taking care of her, till EMANUELLA had been some time in Bed. Nor after she left her, did she retire to her own Chamber; but putting out the Lights, conceal'd herself in one adjoining to her's, and from which she could easily hear every thing that stir'd in it. She had not long stood Centinel, before she was surpriz'd with the Sound of Musick, which the Count had brought to serenade his Mistress; she presently drew nearer to a little Window that was in the Room, and the Instruments being tun'd, accompanied a Voice, which in very Harmonious Accents sang these Stanzas:

I.

*From bright EMANUELLA's Charms,
Ah! what Relief is found?
She every way the Soul alarms!
And never fails to wound.*

II.

*Reason and Love, once Foes profess'd,
Their utmost Forces join:
And make the most obdurate Breast,
Confess her all Divine!*

III.

*Whether she speaks, or looks, or moves,
Strange Passion she inspires!
Scorning the Arts of vulgar Loves,
At once she awes and fires!*

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EMANUELLA was so much accustom'd to Gallantries of this kind, that BERILLIA would not have thought any farther of this, than any other *Serenade*, had she not immediately after the Song heard her open the Window, a Condescension she never had made before, to any who aimed at the Secret to please her: This was sufficient to assure the Fair Inquisitive, that whoever the Person below was, he was possess'd of an uncommon Share of EMANUELLA's Favour, and made her listen to the Conversation they presently after begun, with all the Attention she was able to discover, if possible, the happy Man so remarkably distinguish'd.

THE Moment EMANUELLA appear'd at her Window, EMILIUS, after having made a Sign to those that accompanied him to retire, came as near as he could to it; and in a low Voice, Can you forgive Divine EMANUELLA! *said he*, my keeping you from that Repose which might probably afford you Entertainments more elegant than any you can find abroad. I should be very cruel to my self, *answer'd she*, and unjust to you, should the too nice Reserves of the Country we are in, oblige me to shun a Pleasure such as you have just now afforded me; and as I had my Education in a Place of greater Liberties, I shall make no Scruple of continuing to indulge my self in all those innocent ones I have been accustomed to; among which, I account a free Conversation with Persons of your Sex, provided always their Behaviour is what Honour and Decency will allow of. The Man so favour'd (*resum'd the Count*) must be unworthy indeed, who could not form a Humour, if not born with him, suited to those Principles which alone are capable of recommending him to a Woman of less Virtue than the adorable EMANUELLA. Oh! (*continued he, with a beseeching Accent*) that Virtue, Honour, and Sincerity,

42 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

rity, were the only Requisites to make the Man possess'd of them deserving E M A N U E L L A's Favour! The Man who can prove himself (*return'd she*) possess'd of them, needs no other Qualification to a Woman capable of distinguishing what is truly Meritorious. A great deal more of this kind of Conversation had doubtless pass'd between them, had they not been interrupted by another Set of Musick, who placed themselves under the Window for the same purpose the *Count* had done. E M A N U E L L A, willing to show the Deference she paid him, bad him Good-night, and immediately withdrew: B E R I L L I A, who had heard every Word that had pass'd, made her own Construction of it, and rejoiced that she had found something where-with she might let the World know E M A N U E L L A was not without her Softnesses, as well as those she took the liberty of blaming.

B U T while she pass'd the time in a thousand ill-natur'd Contrivances how to dress up the Affair she had discover'd in the worst Colours, the Lovers were employ'd in Contemplations far different—E M A N U E L L A, who had been extremely charm'd with the Person and Behaviour of her new Adorer, from the first time she saw him, was flattering herself with the Idea of a world of Satisfaction in the Proof of his Sincerity; and he, on the other side, was no less transported, that she seem'd willing to be assured he really was what he pretended.

T H E next Day, at both Morning and Evening Prayers, she did not fail of seeing him; where instead of paying her Devotions to Heaven, she was busied in receiving them herself from the enamour'd *Count*. At Night by Appointment she entertain'd him from her Window, and thus it continued for several Weeks; he still seeming to encrease in the fervency of his Passion, and she in believing it—But while in these Sense-ensnaring
Amuse-

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Amusements she suffered her Soul to be employ'd, BERILLIA was not idle in reporting all she knew, and a thousand times more, to every one she was acquainted with; and in a little time 'twas grown the common talk, that EMANUELLA, the reserv'd discreet EMANUELLA, was fallen in Love with a young Gentleman who was a Stranger in *Madrid*, and from whom she could have no Assurance that he was not already married, or under Engagements, which in Honour she ought not to break through.

EMANUELLA, however was so much respected by all that knew her, that no one would shock her Ears with any such Discourses; till some of the Old and Grave having got notice of it, and fearing her Behaviour in this Point might serve as a Precedent to their own Daughters and Neices, made no Scruple to speak of this Affair to Don JABIN with a good deal of Severity; and he to represent it to her as a very great Solecism in that Decorum she had hitherto so strictly preserved. She could not hear him without a sensible Alarm; but alas! she lov'd and was by this time too far enter'd into the fatal Maze, to be able to extricate herself; there appeared a Prospect of too much Felicity in continuing her Conversation with the charming Count, for her to resign it for any of those dull Considerations he endeavour'd to inspire her with; and besides all this, tho' she had a Wisdom far above her Years, she in this point and in many others also was apt a little too much to depend on her own Strength of Reason; and the only Fault she was guilty of, was *Self-Will*.

THE Adventure being so publick, she thought she might now communicate it to BERILLIA; little suspecting it was through her means it had first been talk'd of: and that malicious and designing Creature, glad of this Opportunity to make her Conduct appear yet more blameable, sooth'd the
Hu-

44 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

Humour she was in, by all the Arts she was Mistress of—— She talk'd continually of the *Count*, she praised his Shape, his Air, his Wit; and whoever has known any thing of Love, will confess, how dangerous it is for a Person, entring into that State, to listen to such Discourses, of an Object which already appears but too Aimable. EMANUELLA suck'd in the delicious Poison, and thought the deceitful Instiller of it her best of Friends: Why, said she, should you deprive your self of the Pleasure of conversing with the Man you love, and who has the tenderest Regard for you, only to satisfy a busy Crowd, who only because they are themselves incapable of tasting those refin'd Delights which Love affords, would deny them to another—— These sort of Arguments won the Fair Deluded, intirely to resolve on holding a Correspondence with the *Count*: which BERILLIA perceiving, thought she might now act as she pleased; and aiming at her Ruin, took these Means to bring it about.

IT was no difficult matter to inform herself where the *Count* lodg'd; which as soon as she had done, she writ a little Billet to him, the Contents of which were in this manner:



To Count EMILIUS.

MY LORD,

THE Passion which Donna EMANUELLA regards you with, is not so much a Secret, but that I know, and pity it: I blame her not for loving a Gentleman of your Accomplishments; but I have too much Friendship for her, not to be angry that she confines herself to a Reserve which makes her so unhappy; I would very fain have you come to a more perfect

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perfect Understanding of each other's Sentiments; and that you may do so, have contriv'd a way to bring you together, in spite of those dull Formalities which have hitherto kept you at a distance. Be at the Back-Gate, which opens into the little Parade, about the Hour of Twelve this Evening, and you shall be conducted to the Presence of your adored EMANUELLA, by her who would be a Friend to both,

BERILLIA.

P. S. I know not to what a height the Affectation of Discretion may transport EMANUELLA, if she should know I sent to you; and besides, it will be better taken, if the Contrivance appears wholly your own — Let this therefore be a Secret; be ready to attest what you shall hear me say — and you may be happy—Adieu.

WHETHER EMILLIUS was really possess'd of all those Qualities which go to the making up a perfect Lover, the Reader will be able to determine, when his future Behaviour shall be related; but 'tis certain he had all the Assiduity, Impatience, Ardency of Desire of the most Passionate, and could not receive this Intelligence of a Friend so unexpected, and so capable of serving him, without an infinity of Transport— He watched the Hour, and went according to appointment; where he had not waited a moment, before BERILLIA appeared to introduce him. He made her a thousand Compliments for the Favour she did him; to all which she made but short Answers, having other Matters in her Head. — The Family not being all in Bed, she told him he must be content to divert himself in Contemplation, till she could find an Opportunity to get EMANUELLA into the Garden. He bow'd, and obey'd, only entreated her to be as expeditious as possible, lest any body coming to walk, as the Sweetness of the Evening might

46 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

might probably invite some one or other, he should be discover'd: Which she assuring him she wou'd, and placing him in an Arbour where he was the least liable to be seen, left him to feast in Imagination on the Pleasures he was shortly to enjoy in Reality.

SHE kept her Word, and he had waited but a very little Time before he perceiv'd her returning, and EMANUELLA with her: he restrain'd the Transports of his bounding Heart, and continued to conceal himself till he should receive his Cue from BERILLIA; and perceiving they were coming down the Walk which led to the Arbour he was in, stood close behind the shelter of some Jessamin and Fillaree, with which it was covered. As they came pretty near, he heard BERILLIA say to her fair Cousin, Why, my Dear, should you persist in this Severity to your self and him you love? Had you but heard with how much Tenderness — with how much Zeal — he pleaded for Admittance, and begg'd me to assist his Suit, the Suit of burning, raging, desperate, dying Love, you could not — nay, you ought not to have denied him. But since you have, *answer'd EMANUELLA, somewhat peevishly,* why do you now upbraid me with it? Suppose I had not, would you have forgiven me? (*hastily resum'd the other.*) There is no need (*said she*) of asking what I would have done, since you have not put me to the tryal. Well then, (*cry'd BERILLIA, easily perceiving her Inclinations*) suppose I really, in pity of his Sufferings, have ventur'd to admit him; suppose he is now in this very Garden full of impatient Wishes, and trembling with Desire to throw himself beneath your Feet; will you consent to pardon what I have done? EMANUELLA, whose Soul was full of disorder'd Emotions, scarcely suffered her to bring out these last Words, before, And is he here? *she cry'd.* I will no longer hide it from you (*reply'd BERILLIA*) and

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and whether you condemn, or thank my Conduct, cannot but take the part of a Passion which to me appears so truly meritorious — But 'tis in his Words, those Words which contrary to the Laws of Friendship, wrought me to introduce him, that I must hope to be clear'd in your Opinion —
Appear! my Lord (*continued she, raising her Voice a little*) appear! and charm her to Forgiveness of us both. She had no sooner spoke this, than rushing from behind his leafy Screen, he threw himself at her Feet, embraced her Knees, warm'd her Hands with ten thousand burning Sighs, and misfed no Art of soft, seducing Love, to melt her tender Soul, and make it all his own.

A s prodigious a share, as all who knew her acknowledged her to have of Wit, she saw not that these were common Arts, which those, least capable of Passion, make use of whenever excited, either by Interest or Vanity; and that both these Inducements tended powerfully to draw an Attempt of this kind on her, she might have known, had she considered how much the Reputation of having a vast Fortune would gratify the one, and her well-known, and universally admired Perfections the other. But, alas! not this Reflection, nor the Remembrance that a thousand times she had heard from others unmov'd, the self-same things which now she listen'd to, had any Power over her — She lov'd — and lov'd in proportion to the Delicacy of her other Sentiments — Her Notions were more refin'd — her Passion more elegant than those of other Women; and having been bred to believe Sincerity one of the highest Virtues, she could not suspect a want of it in the Man she had so good an Opinion of; nor deviate from the Rules of it so far herself, as to affect an Anger she was far from being possess'd of — Her Words, her Looks, her every Action betray'd the Wishes of her Heart — confess'd her Transport —

48 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

port — and told him, that he could not sue in vain. BERILLIA was infinitely satisfied in the Observations she made, and that treacherous Creature receiv'd a thousand *publick* Testimonies of Gratitude from the one, and *private* ones from the other, which she was far from deserving.

THE amorous Pair stay'd not a long time together, lest any Accident should betray their Converse to Don JABIN or his Lady, whom EMANUELLA yet was very loth should know the Secret of her Inclinations — but the persuasive *Count* would not depart, without her Permission to return the next Night in the same manner as he had done this — nor would she have been well satisfied, had he appeared less pressing — And they took leave with less Regret than Lovers usually do, because they both assured themselves of a zealous Promoter of their common Happiness in the Friendship of BERILLIA.

MANY Nights pass'd over as this had done, and at last BERILLIA having brought things pretty near to the pitch she aim'd at, under pretence of waiting in the Garden to receive EMILIUS, would let in her own Lover (who neither being approv'd of by her Father, nor any of her Friends, she could see but by stealth) and when she found EMANUELLA and the *Count* were engag'd in a Conversation in which a third Person might be spar'd, she constantly retir'd to another part of the Garden, and receiv'd the double Satisfaction of the Company of the Man she lov'd, and the Probability of undoing the Woman she hated. Not that any thing had yet pass'd between those two amiable Persons, but what was accountable to the strictest Virtue; yet the Passion she found them both possess'd of — the Opportunities she allow'd them — the continual Hints she gave the *Count*, not to let Modesty be his Enemy — and the Artifices she daily, almost hourly, made use of

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of to melt EMANUELLA'S Soul, and turn her all into Desire ; gave her liberty (who knew Nature pretty well) to imagine an unguarded Minute might arrive, which might perfectly compleat her base Design; and reduce the envy'd fair to a Condition both blameable and pitiable.

THEY were now arriv'd to such a height of Love confess'd, that the most binding Vows of everlasting Constancy had pass'd between them—EMILIUS often press'd, that the Ceremony of the Church might put it past the power of even Fate it self to deprive him of the Blessing she had made him hope. But EMANUELLA would by no means consent, till the return of the Ships sent for that purpose should make her Mistress of that Wealth which was her Due. As she then was, she might have look'd on a Marriage with the Count as extreemly to her Interest ; but as she expected to be, the Advantage was wholly on his Side : And among the other Niceties of her Passion, this was one, never to endure to be obliged to the Man she lov'd. Their mutual Vows however, and her firm Resolution to marry him assoon as this Affair was settled, gave, as it were, a Sanction to much greater Freedoms than otherwise he would have dar'd to have taken, or she would have permitted ; and at last, O how dangerous is it to transgress, even the least Bounds of that Reserve which is enjoined by Virtue for our Guard ! from one Liberty they ventur'd on another, till rapacious, greedy Love, too conscious of his Power, encroached on all, and nothing left for Honour.

DONNA BERILLIA had too much Experience in these Affairs, not to be perfectly sensible of what had happen'd, tho' EMANUELLA'S Modesty, and perhaps already a secret Remorse, would not suffer her to make any one a Confidant in this Part of the Story ; and the mischievous Wretch

50 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

having so much of her Wish compleated, began to study how she should bring about the remainder; that of exposing the Dishonour her Insinuations had in a great measure help'd to occasion, and bring on her unhappy Cousin, the *Shame* and *Misery*, as well as *Guilt*, which waits on a too fond Belief.

FORTUNE seem'd to take Pleasure in assisting her Malice; and before she could find an Opportunity to execute any thing she had form'd, gave an unexpected Shock, which without her aid, would have made a Woman of EMANUELLA's Temper, unfortunate to the last Degree; and it was with an infinity of inward Torment she received the News, that all those vast Possessions left her by her Father, and which had been so long detained by the Baseness of Don PEDRO, having been dispos'd of, and turn'd into ready Cash, and Bills for the Convenience of Exportation, by a sudden Storm were lost, and not above two or three of the Sailors escap'd to bring the fatal Tydings. So dreadful a Misfortune wou'd scarce

give my self no further trouble, but leave you to the Proof. — With these Words she turn'd away, and seem'd as tho' she would have gon out of the Arbour; which EMILIUS perceiving, and repenting of what he had said, catch'd hold of her by her Gown, Stay, Madam, stay, (*cry'd he;*) Pardon the Distraction of a Lover, and ease the Pains you've rais'd by adding more — Confirm the fatal Truth; tell me again my EMANUELLA's lost — that she is unkind — indifferent — false — and kill me with the Sound. Forbid it Heaven (*resum'd she, softning her Voice and sitting down again*) that Love should have such Power over a Heart like yours — Rouze, rouze, my Lord, your Soul, exert the nobler Faculties, think of her Deceit, Hypocrisy, Perjury, and forget her Charms. Had she refused to marry you, thus fallen as she is from all her Hopes, it had been a generous Proof of Self-denial; but now 'tis all but feign'd, she imagines seeming to shun, she more engages your Pursuit, and expects to be press'd to what she wishes — and she will yield, depend upon it, if you insist on the performance of the Contract. Still, still, (*resum'd the impatient Count*) you speak in Riddles — But if ever Pity or Good-Nature sway'd your Soul, let me conjure you, Madam,

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nies, which not all her Fortitude could enable her to sustain with Patience. Had she been Empress of the World, EMILIUS should have shar'd that Grandeur with her; but she lov'd him with a Passion too refin'd, to be content he shou'd share with her an *abject* State of Life. Her Opinion had set him in so noble a Light, that she doubted not of his Love, Honour, or Generosity, and assur'd herself that it would be wholly her own fault, if the Vows he had made her, were not authoriz'd by the Ceremony of the Church.

THE Night after this distracting News was brought, she would not be persuaded to see the Count; and when BERILLIA ask'd her what she should say to him, she knew not what to answer. Confus'd, and wild, torn with a thousand different Anxieties, sometimes bid her reveal the fatal Secret. — Then, with the same Breath, recall'd that Order, — Tell him, I am undone, (*said she.*) Tell him, that cruel Fate, envious of the Blessings of his Love, has ravish'd me for ever from his Sight. — And presently after. No. no. (*triumph'd*

inspire it: in the most interesting you happen to address her, you know to what a Length her Acceptation of those Addresses has carried her —

she would indeed her looser Flame under a Promise of Marriage, which I have already told you was not in her power to make good: However it served for a Pretence, believing (according to the Mutability which is imputed to your Sex) you would be well enough satisfied to decline your Claim before the Return of the Ship — Her Expectations there being cross'd by your Constancy, and an Account she has lately receiv'd of the sudden Death of her Husband, and the Loss of her Fortune, obliges her to act the artful Part, and seem to be averse to what is most her Interest to wish —

But now, my Lord! (*continued she with a well-counterfeited Concern*) I am arriv'd to the blackest Point of all her Character, and what indeed induced me to lay open all the rest — She has lately commenc'd a shameful Conversation with a Person whose Name I know not; but whom if you had ever seen, you would with me acknowledge the Depravity of her Taste — But not to grow tedious in a Relation which can afford you but little Satisfaction, she now, tho' not till now, designs to be your Wife, and only waits your protesting

48 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

port — and told him, that he could not sue in vain. BERILLIA was infinitely satisfied in the Observations she made, and that treacherous Creature receiv'd a thousand *publick* Testimonies of Gratitude from the one, and *private* ones from the other, which she was far from deserving.

THE amorous Pair stay'd not a long time together, lest any Accident should betray their Converse to Don JABIN or his Lady, whom EMANUELLA yet was very loth should know the Secret of her Inclinations — but the persuasive *Count* would not depart, without her Permission to return the next Night in the same manner as he had done this — nor would she have been well satisfied, had he appeared less pressing — And they took leave with less Regret than Lovers usually do, because they both assured themselves of a zealous Promoter of their common Happiness in the Friendship of BERILLIA:

MANY Nights pass'd over as this had done, and at last BERILLIA having brought things pretty near to the pitch she aim'd at, under pretence of waiting in the Garden to receive EMILIUS, would let in her own Lover (who neither being approv'd of by her Father, nor any of her Friends, she could see but by stealth) and when she found EMANUELLA and the *Count* were engag'd in a Conversation in which a third Person might be spar'd, she constantly retir'd to another part of the Garden, and receiv'd the double Satisfaction of the Company of the Man she lov'd, and the Probability of undoing the Woman she hated. Not that any thing had yet pass'd between those two amiable Persons, but what was accountable to the strictest Virtue; yet the Passion she found them both possess'd of — the Opportunities she allow'd them — the continual Hints she gave the *Count*, not to let Modesty be his Enemy — and the Artifices she daily, almost hourly, made use of

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of to melt EMANUELLA'S Soul, and turn her all into Desire ; gave her liberty (who knew Nature pretty well) to imagine an unguarded Minute might arrive, which might perfectly compleat her base Design; and reduce the envy'd fair to a Condition both blameable and pitiable.

THEY were now arriv'd to such a height of Love confess'd, that the most binding Vows of everlasting Constancy had pass'd between them—EMILIUS often press'd, that the Ceremony of the Church might put it past the power of even Fate it self to deprive him of the Blessing she had made him hope. But EMANUELLA would by no means consent, till the return of the Ships sent for that purpose should make her Mistress of that Wealth which was her Due. As she then was, she might have look'd on a Marriage with the Count as extreamly to her Interest ; but as she expected to be, the Advantage was wholly on his Side : And among the other Niceties of her Passion, this was one, never to endure to be obliged to the Man she lov'd. Their mutual Vows however, and her firm Resolution to marry him as soon as this Affair was settled, gave, as it were, a Sanction to much greater Freedoms than otherwise he would have dar'd to have taken, or she would have permitted ; and at last, O how dangerous is it to transgress, even the least Bounds of that Reserve which is enjoined by Virtue for our Guard ! from one Liberty they ventur'd on another, till rapacious, greedy Love, too conscious of his Power, encroached on all, and nothing left for Honour.

DONNA BRILLIA had too much Experience in these Affairs, not to be perfectly sensible of what had happen'd, tho' EMANUELLA'S Modesty, and perhaps already a secret Remorse, would not suffer her to make any one a Confidant in this Part of the Story ; and the mischievous Wretch

50 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

having so much of her Wish compleated, began to study how she should bring about the remainder; that of exposing the Dishonour her Insinuations had in a great measure help'd to occasion, and bring on her unhappy Cousin, the *Shame* and *Misery*, as well as *Guilt*, which waits on a too fond Belief.

FORTUNE seem'd to take Pleasure in assisting her Malice; and before she could find an Opportunity to execute any thing she had form'd, gave an unexpected Shock, which without her aid, would have made a Woman of EMANUELLA's Temper, unfortunate to the last Degree; and it was with an infinity of inward Torment she received the News, that all those vast Possessions left her by her Father, and which had been so long detained by the Baseness of Don PEDRO, having been dispos'd of, and turn'd into ready Cash, and Bills for the Convenience of Exportation, by a sudden Storm were lost, and not above two or three of the Sailors escap'd to bring the fatal Tydings. So dreadful a Misfortune wou'd scarce have been supportable by most young Ladies; but EMANUELLA considered it in a deeper Sense than barely to be reduc'd from one of the *greatest* Fortunes to the *meanest*; she had never set any higher Value on Wealth, than as it might be serviceable to her Friends; and now, having one who was dearer to her than her Soul — one to whom she had made the greatest Condescensions, and whose Estate she imagined was not very large, and one whose Expectations would be strangely disappointed in this Loss, made her regret it with an inconceivable Affliction. She had delay'd marrying him, 'till she was actually in Possession of what she knew wou'd make him perfectly easy; and to be certain it never wou'd be in her Power to make him any other Presents than herself, gaye her Ago-

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nies, which not all her Fortitude could enable her to sustain with Patience. Had she been Empress of the World, EMILIUS should have shar'd that *Grandeur* with her; but she lov'd him with a Passion too refin'd, to be content he shou'd share with her an *abject* State of Life. Her Opinion had set him in so noble a Light, that she doubted not of his Love, Honour, or Generosity, and assur'd herself that it would be wholly her own fault, if the Vows he had made her, were not authoriz'd by the Ceremony of the Church.

THE Night after this distracting News was brought, she would not be persuaded to see the Count; and when BERILLIA ask'd her what she should say to him, she knew not what to answer. Confus'd, and wild, torn with a thousand different Anxieties, sometimes bid her reveal the fatal Secret. — Then, with the same Breath, recall'd that Order, — Tell him, I am undone, (*said she.*) Tell him, that cruel Fate, envious of the Blessings of his Love, has ravish'd me for ever from his Sight. — And presently after, No, no, (*resum'd she*) I will not have him know it yet. — I will have the Satisfaction of taking one dear Adieu, yet one more fond Embrace before we part for ever. — 'Tis possible my Grief may rise to that prodigious Height as to destroy me — and at once rid me of the Pain of Thought — of Memory — of curs'd Apprehension. BERILLIA all this while seem'd to endeavour to persuade her to Moderation, and entreated her not to shun his Presence; telling her, she was certain to lose her Sight, would be an Affliction infinitely more inconsolable to him than that of her *Estate*: But the Arguments she made use of to convince her, she contriv'd shou'd appear too weak to be of any Efficacy, desiring nothing more than to be entrusted with a Message to him, which she resolv'd to deliver in a

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52 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

manner little conformable to that in which it should be given.

TWICE, or thrice, the perplex'd EMANUELLA sat her self down to write to her belov'd EMILIUS, and as oft lamented her Incapacity; the Emotions of her Soul were too violent to permit any Coherence in her Words. — And after a long debate within herself what would best become her Passion, and her Honour, desir'd BERRILLIA to acquaint him with her Misfortune; and gave her leave to let him know she regretted such a Disappointment, only as she thought it rendered her more unworthy of him. BERRILLIA rejoyc'd beyond measure at this Opportunity of executing what she design'd; assur'd her she would do in every thing as she had commanded. —

And by this means, *said the cunning* Ingrate, I shall make a Tryal of his Constancy: For if Men are by Nature so Self-interested as they are reported, this Account I have to give him, will prove his noblest Sentiments. The Time for his Approach being arriv'd, broke off any farther Discourse; and she went into the Garden to receive him, leaving the half-distracted EMANUELLA almost drown'd in Tears.

THE impatient EMILIUS was waiting at the Gate, full of a thousand transporting Reflections on the *past*, and pleasing Expectations of *coming* Joys. when BERRILLIA open'd it to him, and delaying to say any thing to him of what she had to reveal, till she had brought him into the Arbour, the happy Scene which had so lately blest him; she then began to accost him in this manner. My Lord, *said she*, I have a History to relate so little of a piece with those I have already given you of EMANUELLA's Sensibility of your Merits, that I know not if you will forgive me for relating it. EMILIUS, whose Passion was infinitely greater than what most of his Sex, especially

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ally after Enjoyment, are possess'd of, cou'd not hear these Words, and miss E M A N U E L L A from the place she us'd to be always ready to receive him in, without an inexpressible Disorder; which he could not presently overcome, enough to be able to ask what it was she meant. The artful Tray-trefs, observing his Surprize, encreas'd it, by speaking in this manner. — I see, my Lord, (*resum'd she*) you cannot hear any thing which offers at a discovery of E M A N U E L L A's Falshood, without the utmost Concern: Nor do I wonder at it, having been Witnesses of so many tender Protestations of an ardent Passion on both sides. You may think it strange, perhaps, that I, her Cousin, and her Friend, should tell you this — but what is there in my power to do, which may conceal an Inconstancy, which, tho' I should invent ten thousand Stratagenis, in spite of me will shew itself? I might indeed have made some Excuse for her not seeing you this Night, which might have seem'd plausible enough; but what cou'd I have said, which could have beguil'd your Impatience in the succeeding ones? — Since then 'tis what you must know, sooner or later, I thought it the more generous part to acquaint you with it early, and arm you for the Misfortune you will doubtless hear of in a little time from other Tongues than mine. The enamour'd Count felt his Heart sink in him all the time she had been speaking, and could hardly assume Spirit enough, when she had done, to entreat her to let him know, in few Words, the Accident that had befallen him. I will, my Lord! *said she*, — but first let me deliver the Message I received from E M A N U E L L A: She bid me tell you, that having this Day an Account of that Ship, in which her whole Fortune was trusted, being lost, she cannot think of marrying any Man, but one whose Estate can make up for the Deficiency of hers, and that yours

54 The RASH RESOLVE: Or,

cannot, she has been inform'd: Therefore there being a Necessity of breaking with you, thinks it improper to see you any more—How! (*interrupted the Count*) no more but so? *a Necessity of breaking with me—See me no more!*

Good Heaven! is it possible she can so suddenly recede from that height of Passion she last Night profess'd, and all at once degenerate into Coldness and damn'd Indifference! — But you mistake her sure, and what is Over-Tenderness misconstrue Hate — You'll soon be able to judge whether I do or not, (*resum'd BÉRILLIA, affecting an Air of Indignation*) — But I shall give my self no further trouble, but leave you to the Proof. — With these Words she turn'd away, and seem'd as tho' she would have gon out of the Arbour; which EMILIUS perceiving, and repenting of what he had said, catch'd hold of her by her Gown, Stay, Madam, stay, (*cry'd he;*) Pardon the Distraction of a Lover, and ease the Pains you've rais'd by adding more — Confirm the fatal Truth; tell me again my EMANUELLA's lost — that she is unkind — indifferent — false — and kill me with the Sound. Forbid it Heaven (*resum'd she, softning her Voice and sitting down again*) that Love should have such Power over a Heart like yours — Rouze, rouze, my Lord, your Soul, exert the nobler Faculties, think of her Deceit, Hypocrisy, Perjury, and forget her Charms. Had she refused to marry you, thus fallen as she is from all her Hopes, it had been a generous Proof of Self-denial; but now 'tis all but feign'd, she imagines seeming to shun, she more engages your Pursuit, and expects to be press'd to what she wishes — and she will yield, depend upon it, if you insist on the performance of the Contract. Still, still, (*resum'd the impatient Count*) you speak in Riddles — But if ever Pity or Good-Nature sway'd your Soul, let me conjure you, Madam,

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Madam, to explain. I will (*said she*) but you shall swear first by every thing that's Holy, never to utter to EMANUELLA or any other Person what I am about to speak. I do (*cry'd he*) and may just Heaven renounce me when I break it. Know then (*pursu'd she*) that you have been deceiv'd, betray'd into a fictitious hope of marrying one who has been long since, if Vows have any power, another's Wife: My self was present at the Ceremony; but the unhappy Man was driven from her Arms, e'er Consummation of their Loves. EMANUELLA has a Heart too sensible of the tender Passion to be long without an Object to inspire it: in the short Interval you happen'd to address her, you know to what a Length her Acceptation of those Addresses has carried her — She veil'd indeed her looser Flame under a Promise of Marriage, which I have already told you was not in her power to make good: However it served for a Pretence, believing (according to the Mutability which is imputed to your Sex) you would be well enough satisfied to decline your Claim before the Return of the Ship — Her Expectations there being cross'd by your Constancy, and an Account she has lately receiv'd of the sudden Death of her Husband, and the Loss of her Fortune, obliges her to act the artful Part, and seem to be averse to what is most her Interest to wish — But now, my Lord! (*continued she with a well-counterfeited Concern*) I am arrived to the blackest Point of all her Character, and what indeed induced me to lay open all the rest — She has lately commenc'd a shameful Conversation with a Person whose Name I know not; but whom if you had ever seen, you would with me acknowledge the Depravity of her Taste — But not to grow tedious in a Relation which can afford you but little Satisfaction, she now, tho' not till now, designs to be your Wife, and only waits your protesting

56 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

not to live without her, to engage her yielding to save you from Despair. Hell first shall seize her (*cry'd the Count, transported with the utmost Fury*) let her chuse a Fiend from thence, the fittest *Par amour*, and make the Wretch she has chose her Property, BERILLIA was in so much Rapture at the Success of her Project, that it was very hard for her to counterfeit any longer the Concern she had put on for the Baseness of so near a Relation; and therefore having afresh engag'd his Vows of Secrecy, told him a longer Stay might occasion Suspicion in EMANUELLA; and receiving a thousand Thanks from him for her friendly Caution, took her leave, and went to EMANUELLA, with the Story she had prepared for her.

SHE found that unhappy Lady in the Posture she had left her, extended on the Floor, in the most cruel Storm of agonizing Grief, and desperate Love; but it was not in the power of all her Sufferings to turn the Heart of this more than *Barbarian*; and when she saw her rise to meet her, and heard her, with an Accent which might have melted a Heart of Adamant, enquire how 'twas her dear EMILIUS look'd, what 'twas he said, and a thousand such Questions, which her Tenderness suggested; she sat for some Moments without making any Reply, and when she did, it was in this manner: I am infinitely troubled, my dear Cousin (*said BERILLIA*) that you employ'd me in this Errand; I know not what to do, whether to relate the Truth, or amuse you with a Falshood, be the most commendable: but summon all your Fortitude, arm your self with Courage to disdain the Baseness, the groveling Disposition of fordid, ungrateful Man. Oh Heaven! (*cry'd EMANUELLA, ready to faint with Apprehension*) what means BERILLIA! what has EMILIUS done! All that can compleat a Villain, (*answer'd she*) a most consummate Villain!

TWICE

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TWICE did the poor EMANUELLA swoon away, before BERILLIA explain'd her cruel Meaning; but being eager to add to her Affliction, as soon as ever she was in a Condition to listen to what she said; Cease, dearest Cousin (*cry'd she*) to mourn; rather let generous Indignation fire your Breast, and arm you to disdain not only the perfidious *Count*, but the whole Race of Man—— The cold, insensible, regardless Traytor, heard me with Tears recount your Grief, and speak what you endur'd in the Necessity of parting with him, with so unmov'd an Air, as tho' he were no Man, or were unskill'd in his Sex's Arts of Dissimulation. At last he said he pitied your Misfortune, 'twas very unhappy indeed for a young Lady to be without the means of keeping up the Grandeur she was born to—— but that you must study Patience—— that doubtless a great many Ladies would be very willing to accept of you as a Companion——and he hoped you would not want—— bid me give his Service—— and tell you that he wish'd it were in his power to remedy your Misfortunes.—— I had not Patience, but revenged the Contempt with all the Revilings that a Woman's Tongue, made keen by the most inveterate Malice, could utter; but he appeared as unconcern'd at this, as at any thing else I had said: and making towards the Door, would fain have left me to rail by my self: but I detain'd him for some time, on purpose to vent the Fury I was possess'd of: but at length he broke from me, and left me almost breathless with the Struggle. Here she stopp'd, expecting what EMANUELLA would reply; but what that Lady felt at so unexpected, so shocking a Relation, was too big for Words! silent the stormy Passions rolled in her tortur'd Bosom, disdain-ing the mean Ease of raging or complaining—— It was a considerable time before she utter'd the least Syllable, and when she did, she seem'd to
start

58 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

start as from some dreadful Dream, and cry'd, It is enough—— in knowing one, I know the whole deceiving Sex—— Nor will I be a second time betray'd—— I'll hide me for ever from their Arts, their soothing Flatteries, their subtle Insinuations—— no more I'll hear, or see, or think of Man—— The best is base—— EMILIUS, EMILIUS whom I lov'd is base! —— Few Women but in such a Circumstance would have writ, and upbraided the cruel Destroyer of their Peace; but EMANUELLA's Soul disdain'd those Testimonies of continued Weakness, which however bitter they may appear in the *Expression*, the *Meaning* still is *Love*; for the Indifferent give not themselves the Pains. It was of this Sort she now wish'd to be thought by EMILIUS, and this Disposition help'd BERILLIA to keep any Discovery how much she had injur'd him from her Ears.

BEING determined never to be seen in Publick more, she thought a monastick Life the safest and most convenient Retirement from the World; and communicating her Intentions to Don JABIN and his Wife, (letting them know no other, than that it was the loss of her Fortune which had made her of this Mind) they seem'd to think it the most prudent Method she could use; and the very next Day, without any other Consideration than the flying from a World in which she believ'd it an Impossibility ever to be happy, went into a Nunnery of *Pourclairs*, making choice of that Order, as being the severest; resolving to punish her easy Belief, and the Condescension she had made to EMILIUS, in as rigid a manner as was possible. He, who after he had left BERILLIA, and began deliberately to weigh what had been told him, found it very difficult to believe it; and tho' he could not imagine for what Reason that young Lady, who had so much befriended him in the beginning of his Amour, should invent Stories so much

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much to the prejudice of a Relation who lov'd her, only to break off a Correspondence with him; yet he was sometimes about to write to EMANUELLA in such a manner, as without Breach of the Vow he had made to BERILLIA, would have given him some light into the Truth: But the Consideration, that if she was not guilty in the manner she was accused, yet that the Ship in which her Effects were, was lost, was past all doubt; and that to a young Nobleman, full of Ambition, and the love of Grandeur, was sufficient to abate the Vigour of his other Passion: Beside, he had already enjoy'd her; and where is the Man who dies for a repeated Possession? — He therefore forbore to examine any farther into the Truth of the Affair; and tho' he had some melancholy Reflection for a while, yet the natural Gaiety of his Humour diverted them from doing him any great Prejudice.

THE malicious BERILLIA triumph'd in having remov'd a Person whose superior Graces rendred her's unobservable, and revell'd in the continued Possession of the Man she lov'd without danger of Reproof. EMANUELLA was the only unhappy Person; and it was neither in the power of Time, Absence, Philosophy, or Religion, to obliterate the Memory of EMILIUS, or assuage her Sorrows.

The End of the First Part.



THE



THE
RASH RESOLVE:
 OR, THE
 Untimely Discovery.

PART II.



THE Passion which the *Count* had profess'd for *EMANUELLA*, was too sincere to be easily thrown off; and tho' in his Circumstances, it was wholly improper he should marry without a Fortune; yet he could not resolve to quit her without the utmost Reluctance——The first Storm of Indignation which the malicious *BERILLIA* had raised in his Soul, was no sooner over, than a great part of his former Tenderneſs return'd. He consider'd that what he had heard was so inconsistent with her Character, and with her Behaviour, that had it come from the Mouth of any other Person, it would not have found the least room in his Belief. Nor could he even from her set it down for Truth, in spite of the Improbability there appeared, that she should have

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have any Design in deceiving him into an ill Opinion of a Woman, whom he knew she had Reason to Esteem—This Division in his Thoughts, made him for some Days sufficiently disquieted. Nor was he a little amaz'd, and alarm'd, when he was told that she was retir'd into a *Monastery*—This Proceeding, he thought vastly incongruous with the Account *BERILLIA* had given him of her Humour; and he was at the greatest loss in the World what Judgment to form—Fain would he have writ—fain would he have made her a Visit at the Gate of the *Pourclairs*; but the Promise her Cousin had exacted from him, deferr'd him on the one side; and on the other, the Reflection that, in case she should be found innocent, he should be obliged to renew those Pretensions, which, as she now was, were no ways conformable to his Ambition—However, he could not restrain his Inclinations, which were yet very tender to her, and, perhaps, might in time have weighed down *Interest*, if a Chance had not happened in his Affairs, which turn'd the Balance, and prov'd how little Dependance there is on Man, when *Love* and *Gratitude* are the only Motives to engage his Constancy.

HE was one Morning in his Bed full of uneasy and perplex'd Meditations, when his Servant brought him a Letter, in which he found these Lines:

To Count EMILIUS.

THAT you have wronged me in the most tender Part, I make no more doubt of, than that you are a Man of Honour enough to endeavour a Defence of what you have done. I desire therefore that you will meet me an Hour hence in the Field of *St. Cruzada*, either to repair the Injuries you have done

62 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

*done me by your Life, or by depriving me of mine, put
an end to the just Resentment of*

OCTAVIO.

THE Surprize with which EMILIUS read this Challenge, was proportionable to the Occasion. He could not imagine for which of his Actions he should be call'd to account by a Gentleman whom he had scarce any knowledge of; whom he had not seen above two or three times, and whom he never had any particular Conversation with: But bethinking himself what a Man of Honour ought to do in such a Case, he ask'd if the Person who brought the Letter waited for an Answer; and being told that he did, he call'd for Pen and Ink, and immediately return'd one in this manner:

TO DON OCTAVIO.

I Should be very sorry to be guilty of an Injury to any one; and am certain it is as distant from my Power as Inclination, to have done any thing to you, which cou'd justly occasion a Summons of the Nature I have received: But since I am accus'd of it, am ready to give you such Satisfaction as becomes a Gentleman; and to that end will attend you at that Time and Place appointed; being no less desirous to know the Reason which has made you my Enemy, than you are to declare yourself one to

EMILIUS.

HE had no sooner dispatch'd this, than he rose, and making what haste he could to dress, was in the Field little later than his Antagonist; whom, as he came near, he found had his Sword ready drawn, which oblig'd him to put himself also in a Posture of Defence: But being unwilling to fight, without knowing for what Cause — You see Don

OCTA-

The Untimely DISCOVERY. 63

OCTAVIO! *said he*, I have obey'd your Summons; but as I am yet unacquainted with the Motive which induc'd you to send it, I desire you will be just enough to inform me, before we engage. You feign an Ignorance (*interrupted the other fiercely*) 'tis impossible you should not know, that Rivalship in Love is what the *Spanish* Honour cannot brook. — Were the adorable JULIA less worthy of my Passion, the long Addresses I have made her would scorn to yield to any new Pretender — therefore, defend the Wrong you have had the Boldness to attempt, or tamely fall the unworthy Victim of impatient Jealousy.

THESE Words, and the Name of JULIA, so much surpriz'd the Count, that he could neither answer them immediately, nor recollect himself enough to parry the Thrust with which they were accompany'd, and he receiv'd a slight Wound in the Arm, and was very near suffering a second, in a place, perhaps, more dangerous, before he had regain'd Presence enough of Mind to avoid it. But as his Surprise vanish'd, Indignation kindled in his Soul, and he soon let the other know it was not Fear which had rendred him thus long unactive; the Smart of the Wound rais'd him to an equal Fury, and he forbore endeavouring to convince the rash OCTAVIO of his Mistake, 'till he had punish'd his Unadvisedness. Being an excellent Master of his Sword, he not only return'd doubly the Wound he had receiv'd, but by disarming him, rendered him incapable of giving more; but his Rage diminishing with his Adversary's Power, he generously return'd his Weapon, desiring still they might be Friends, and that he would explain what 'twas he meant by Rivalship, and JULIA; assuring him, that he had no design on any Lady of that Name. OCTAVIO, tho' he had too much Honour to renew the Combat with a Person whose Power it so lately had been

to

64 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

to have taken his Life, gave him a Look which sufficiently demonstrated the continued Rancour of his Heart, and only telling him, that he knew JULIA too well to believe she cou'd love a Man without being first belov'd by him, flung sullenly away, leaving EMILIUS in a greater Consternation, than his Behaviour had put him in before. He cou'd by no means comprehend the meaning of this Adventure, nor from what Source the Jealousy of OCTAVIO had sprung. He had heard much Talk of a Lady call'd JULIA; but he had never seen her, nor was he certain it was for her sake all this had happened: but from that Moment he received a secret Wish, that he were indeed happy enough to be in that Lady's favour, whom he had heard spoke of as one of the greatest Fortunes in *Madrid*, and a celebrated Beauty. The bare Conjecture that there was a possibility that she might have seen and liked him, went a great way towards the expelling his Passion for a Woman he had already enjoy'd, and who now no longer had it in her Power to conduce to the Gratification of his Ambition. — He spent that whole Day in Enquiries what sort of a Woman this JULIA was, how large her Fortune, and who they were that had made Pretensions to her; and from all Hands receiv'd such Accounts, as fill'd him with ardent Longings, that OCTAVIO's Jealousy might have something more in it than an imaginary Cause. He was told by some, who seem'd to know a good deal of her Affairs, that that Gentleman had for a long time profess'd himself her Lover, but he had of late been deny'd the Privilege of visiting her, tho' for what reason, was yet a Secret; and these Tidings half confirm'd the pleas'd EMILIUS, that he was more blest than he cou'd have imagin'd.

BUT, as to inform himself as much as possible of the Truth of this Affair, took up the Day, the
Night

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Night was employ'd in Contrivances how to make the best Advantage of what had been told. He had found out where she liv'd, and also that being an Orphan, the Riches she was possess'd of were entirely at her own Dispose; and nothing he thought now remained for him to do, but to form some pretty Stratagem, whereby he might become acquainted with her, without appearing guilty of a Boldness which might forfeit all the Kindness she had for him. Few Men had been more fortunate in Inventions of this Nature than himself; and 'tis scarce to be doubted, but that he would soon have found one plausible enough for his purpose, if he had not been spar'd the pains, by receiving in the Morning a Billet of a far different kind than that which had been brought him the Day before. The Contents of it were these.

TO COUNT EMILIUS.

SINCE we are taught, that of two Evils 'tis best to chuse the least; to avoid being guilty of Ingratitude, I am oblig'd to break through the Decorum of my Sex, by writing to a Gentleman, to whom, I believe, I am altogether a Stranger.

For the Wound you have received on my account, I can do no less in Honour than apply a Balsam; to which end, I send you the most experienc'd Artist in this Kingdom: And if the Punishment of the Offender may be any Reparation for the Offence, give you my solemn Promise the rash OCTAVIO shall dearly repent his Insolence, if I have any of that Power over him he pretends.

And tho' such an Invitation may be thought too great a Freedom, I shall be glad to make you sensible by Word of Mouth, as soon as you are in a Condition to come abroad, how much I regret the Injury has been done you. If a Person, so little qualified to merit

66 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

ris your Conversation, has hitherto escap'd your Notice, the Messenger, who brings this, can inform you where you may know more of the Sentiments of

JULIA.

AFTER having mention'd the Inquietudes he was in, to find a proper Method to introduce himself to this Lady, 'twould be needless to express the Pleasure this Letter gave him. He commanded that the Person who brought it shou'd be shew'd up into his Chamber; and finding he appear'd like a Gentleman, us'd him in the most handsome manner imaginablé. The other soon inform'd him, that he was a Surgeon, and that he was order'd by Donna JULIA de VENELLI to attend him with all possible diligence 'till his Wound was cur'd. And tho' the *Count* assur'd him it was but a Scratch, and unworthy his Regard, yet he wou'd needs apply a Plaister to it; and pulling out of his Pocket a Scarf made of Silver Gauze, and curiously embroider'd with Crimson and Green, and a Locket to fasten it together, which had a Cypher in it with the Letters of her Name set round with Diamonds of a very great Value, told him, she had sent him that to bind his Arm.— A Man of less Gallantry, and less Inclination to be well in the Esteem of such a Lady as Donna JULIA, would scarce have refus'd so obliging a Present; and it is easy to imagine, that he suffer'd it to be put on with a Pleasure suitable to the Favour of the Sender. He intreated him to stay, and order'd a genteel Morning-Repast to be got ready, while he withdrew to his Closet to answer the welcome *Billet*, which he did in these Words.

To

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To the most Excellent Donna
JULIA de VENELLI.

A HURT so trifling as that which I received from the Hand of Don OCTAVIO requir'd not a Balsam of that Divine Nature your Goodness has bestow'd, — You rather, Madam! should have reserv'd your Pity for those Wounds the Fame of your Accomplishments has already made but too deep, and which (I had almost said I fear) your Eyes will render incurable, but by Death, or a Condescension, such as 'twou'd be the utmost Vanity to hope — But whatever Destiny you inflict, cannot but be glorious; and certainly, the next Blessing to the Heaven of living in your Favour, would be dying in the Pursuit of it.

I wear, most angelick of your Sex! the justest Sense of your unmerited Favours at my Heart, and your admirable Scarf on my Arm; which tho' it infuses not Pains of the same Nature as those of Hercules's Shirt, will differ but little in their Consequence, if ever you should discontinue to allow me the Effects of that Infinity of Mercy you seem at present possess of, and refuse me the Privilege of avowing that I am

The Divine JULIA'S

Everlasting Slave,

EMILIUS.

P. S.

If the Sword of OCTAVIO had emptied my Veins of the best part of their Blood, that Tide of Extasy you have inspired me with, would fill them up again, and give a nobler Life, and added Vigour, to bear
me

68 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

me to your Feet with humblest Gratitude and sublimest Joys. — Delay then my impatient Wishes no longer, this Day permit me to offer up my Soul, an Oblation worthy of your Acceptation, no otherwise than by its Sincerity.

THE Surgeon, who easily guess'd at the Lady's meaning who had sent him, went away perfectly pleased that he should be able to give her an Account of EMILIUS's Behaviour, which he knew would be so much to her Satisfaction. And the Count extreamly lifted up at this unexpected Turn of good Fortune, forgot every thing in the Contemplation of the Advantages he should enjoy in marrying a Woman of Donna JULIA's Quality and Estate; which that it was in his power to do, he might very well suppose, when she had made him such Advances. It is not to be doubted but that he took all possible Care in the dressing himself that Day, to secure the Conquest he had gain'd; and having no Orders to make a Secret of his Visit to her, he went into his Chariot attended by two running Footmen, and four others all in rich Liveries — But alas! there needed not all this Pomp to engage the already enamour'd JULIA: She had for a long time been the Slave of Love; she ador'd the charming Count from the first Moment she beheld him, which happen'd to be at Church soon after his Arrival; and after many fruitless Endeavours to become acquainted with him, and hearing of his Engagements with EMANUELLA, she fell into a Melancholy, which had like to have cost her her Life — Don OCTAVIO had made his Addresses to her for many Months, and at first flatter'd himself with hopes of Success; but perceiving a sudden Alteration in her Humour, immediately imagined it to proceed from the Love of some other Person: And not able to discover any thing of the Truth, he at last found

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found means by bribing a Priest (for what will not Gold influence the Minds of some People to!) to get into the Confessional Chair at the time when she was to come to confess; and by telling her that her Melancholy, if not caused by some spiritual Remorse for any Faults she might have been guilty of, was sinful; and if she did not disburden herself to her ghostly Father, and endeavour by Works of Penance to merit Absolution, her Case was more desperate than she was aware of; frightened her so, being naturally pretty much bigotted to the Religion she had been educated in, that she presently confess'd she was in Love. With whom? (*cry'd out the pretended Father*) for if it be a Person worthy of you, I will undertake to make you happy with him. To which again she as innocently as before answer'd, EMILIUS, a Roman Count lately arriv'd at Madrid—She had said more, but the Lover could no longer counterfeit the Priest; he threw off his Disguise, and showing himself to be OCTAVIO, upbraided her Ingratitude and Falshood, as he term'd it, and vow'd Revenge on his happy Rival—It was in vain she endeavour'd to deter him, by threatening him with those Penalties the Law inflicts on all who dare to prophane the Sacrament of Confession in the manner he had done. His Rage was deaf to to all Considerations, either of himself, or the Priest who had assisted him in this Stratagem; and he left her in the Church, to ruminate on what had happen'd, while he went and prepared a Challenge for EMILIUS, as has been before related—It is not to be supposed but she had Spies to observe his Motions; but they were either too careless of the Injunction laid on them, or too late to prevent him from fighting with the Count: But they brought her Intelligence of all that had happen'd; and since there was no Mischief on either Side, she was not
a little

70 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

a little contented that she had so good a Pretence to write to *EMILIUS*. Nor after she had received his Answer, can we imagine she was less diligent in making herself appear as amiable as possible, than he had been. Not only her own Person, but her House and Servants were all set forth to the best Advantage, and every thing seem'd so rich, so fine, so neat, that by the care that was used in making it so, the expected Guest might easily perceive how welcome a one he was.

THE mutual Desire each had to please the other, very much heighten'd the Graces of them both — *JULIA* had a Face and Shape to which *Nature* had been so extreamly indulgent, that she stood but little in need of any Aids from Art; but having had Recourse to all that even the most curious had invented, joined to the Pleasure which sparkled in her Eyes, at sight of an Object she had so long and so ardently languish'd to behold, her Beauty appeared with such an Illustration, as requir'd a Heart better fortified with Constancy than was that of *EMILIUS* to withstand its Charms. And tho' as handsome as she was, she was by many degrees far less attractive than the abandon'd *EMANUELLA*; yet he imagined her infinitely more so — O the Enchantments of *Novelty*! the Delights there are in having something to subdue — the pleasing Fears — the sweet Hopes, — the tender Anxieties — the thousand nameless, soft Perplexities which fill the roving Soul of Man when in pursuit of a new Conquest! but after Possession are no more remembered — Then cold *Civility* succeeds *tumultuous Transport* — When present, forc'd *Compliments* supply the place of *Ardor*; when absent, curs'd *Indifference* that of *impatient Longings* — and dull insipid *Gratitude* is all the yielding Fair can hope for, even from the best of Men. *EMILIUS* now thought he had never seen any thing so lovely as *JULIA*, and

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immediately became possess'd with as much real Passion for her, as a Heart could be, so liable to Mutability as his was. Love and Wit inspir'd him with a thousand engaging Softnesses, which she, eager to credit what she wish'd, believ'd; and tho' she had heard a vast deal of his Pretensions to EMANUELLA, she now imagined him so intirely her own, that it never would be in the power of any other Face to make the least Alteration in his Sentiments to her disadvantage — She lov'd with too sincere and passionate a Flame to be able to disguise it; and what she confess'd not in Words, her Eyes sufficiently inform'd him, and he reaped all the Satisfaction he could hope from this first Visit — He had her Leave to declare himself her Servant — She promised to discharge all others that pretended to that Title — and let him know enough of her Inclinations to sooth Imagination with a belief she would in a short time be brought to yield to all he wish'd — Resolving by his Assiduity to render himself worthy of the Favours he had receiv'd, he waited on her every day, and they were scarce ever asunder but in those Hours which Decency required.

THERE was nothing of this Affair a Secret; the Jealousy of OCTAVIO, the publick Visits of EMILIUS, and the undissembled Condescensions of the Lady, engross'd the whole Discourse of the Town. But what became of EMANUELLA when she sheard this News, to whom the ill-natur'd BERILLIA immediately convey'd it in the worst and most distracting Description her Malice could invent! She doubted not of his Coldness and Ingratitude before, by the implicit Faith she put in that Wretch who had so cruelly betray'd her; but now to be told, to be assur'd, with a Million of aggravating Circumstances, that he profer'd to another all those Soul-attracting Protestations by which she had been deceiv'd — to know another was
in

72 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

in possession of all those Tendernesses — those soft Endearments — those transporting Fondnesses that once she thought were her's for ever, gave her Agonies, too terrible to be conceiv'd but by those who have felt the same: Yet, in spite of all she endur'd, she still maintaining her Resolution, of never seeing or writing to him more, firm and unshaken; and the more she heard of his Perfidiousness, the more she thought it beneath her to take notice of it.

BUT while she was indulging her Despair for the many Misfortunes which had already befallen her, Don JABIN, and his Lady, who were extremely sincere in their Professions of Friendship to her, were labouring all they could for her Service. They had a very great Interest with the Chief of the Nobility, and were so industrious in exerting it, that the Case of this distress'd Lady being represented to his Majesty's Consideration in terms the most prevailing, engag'd him to command that Don PEDRO, who was yet at *Madrid*, should out of his own Estate make up some part of the Losses she had sustained; which tho' happening by the uncertainty of the Sea, were primarily occasioned by him, in refusing to bring over her Effects in a more favourable Season. The avaricious old Monster had no way to avoid this Decree; and the Grief of being obliged to obey it, together with the Stings he felt in his Conscience for the many Crimes he had been guilty of, threw him a second time into a Fit of raging Madness, of which in a few Weeks he died unpitied by the whole World. The Provision which by the King's Order he had made for EMANUELLA, gave her kind Relations hope, that they should have her among them again, and they omitted no Persuasions, that she would quit that austere Life, and return to the World again; but she had Grievs which were not in Compass of their

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their power, to remedy, she could not endure to think of living where there was the least Probability of seeing the false EMILIUS; and all that was said to move her to the contrary, was no more than throwing Water against the Wind. Don JABIN and his Wife were both of them extreamly troubled, that all they had done for her was ineffectual to restore her to her former Chearfulness; but perceiving that their Endeavours to dissuade her from a monastick Life, serv'd only to increase her Obstinacy of persisting in it; they at length gave her over, not without a Belief that the Severities of that Order she had an Intention to embrace, would oblige her to change her Mind long before her Year of Probation was expired; and that she would in a little time be as impatient to quit the Convent, as now she appeared at being persuaded to it.

THESE good People were not deceived in their Conjectures; they soon saw the Effect they guessed, though longer ignorant of the Cause. — In a much less space of time than they imagined, EMANUELLA indeed wish'd her self in any Place, rather than that in which she was; but the Motive which induc'd her to that Desire, nay, inforc'd her to a Necessity of it, was of a nature so shocking, so terrible to be born, that it requires a Pen infinitely more skill'd in Description than mine, to represent a Condition of so consummate a Misery.

IT was not many Weeks since she had been among the *Pourclairs*, and in that time had not so much as once thought of the Consequence, which in all probability might attend the guilty Condescensions, her Excess of Passion had yielded to EMILIUS: But now the Hour was come which was to make her know, that all she had endur'd from the Cruelty of Don PEDRO — from the Loss of her Fortune — from the Ingratitude and Falshood

74 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

of the Man she lov'd, were trifling Woes in competition with those in store for her—— She found she was now destined to go through all that can be conceived of Shame—— of Misery—— of Horror—— in fine, she found herself with Child! — with Child without a Husband! —— with Child by a Man who she had heard from all hands was going to be married to another! —— and what was yet worse, by a Man whom she accounted the vilest, and most perfidious of his Sex! —— What Words—— nay, what Imagination can paint out her Distress as it deserves! —— She was infinitely more wretched than any other Woman would have been in the like Circumstances, by the Addition of a superior Understanding —— and the Greatness of her Spirit, and that Fortitude which had so well enabled her to bear all other Misfortunes, serv'd her but to encrease the Misery of her Condition, and prevent her from stooping to those Measures by which she alone could hope to secure her Reputation, and screen what had happen'd from the Knowledge of a censorious and un pitying World. Had she now written to the *Count*, there was a Possibility, that in spite of his new Passion for Donna JULIA, all might have been well; his former Tenderness on the Eclaircissement of her Innocence, and the Treachery of BERILLIA, might, perhaps have return'd: Or if not so, which indeed after Enjoyment could not be much expected; yet Honour and Gratitude would at least have obliged him to protect and support her in those Miseries, to which her Love for him had reduc'd her: But this was an Expedient she could not bear even to think on; and as often as it came into her Mind, she would reject it with all the Contempt imaginable—— What (*said she*) shall I descend to ask a Favour from the Man to whom I owe my Ruin? —— Shall I, forgetful of my Wrongs, submit to be obliged to that cursed Villain?—

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Villain ? — that insolent Disdainer of my Truth and Tenderness ? No, rather let me suffer all the Plagues that Heaven can inflict, or Flesh endure — Let me be driven to Want, to Beggary — exposed to publick Infamy, the Sport of every Slave — or tarrying here, be buried quick — it will be a less Shock — less Horror than an Obligation to that intolerable Fiend ! — the hated, loath'd EMILIVS ! Thus did the Haughtiness of her Soul, and fatal Conscioufness, how little she had deserved the Treatment she had found, suggest. Nor was her *Resentment* less pernicious to her than her *Modesty*; for as the one prevented her from making any Discovery to the *Count*, so did the other also deprive her of the Power of uttering the least Hint of this Affair to Don JABIN or his Lady. BERILLIA was the only Person to whom she could persuade herself to reveal it : but Heaven had by this time began to inflict on that false Creature some part of the Punishments her base Actions merited ; her criminal Amour had by some means come to her Father's knowledge, and he had sent her under the care of an old Servant into the Country, far from *Madrid*, and the Conversation of her Lover ; tho' had she been in the way of being intrusted, 'tis little probable she would have been of any service : But EMANUELLA, who suspected not her Perfidy, received a considerable Addition to her Sorrows, by being told she was gone. Pity is a prodigious Alleviator of Affliction, the most violent Grief finds some Ease in complaining ; but when our Woes are of a nature as will not admit revealing, they prey on our very Vitals, waste the Spirits with unintermitting Anguish ! and seldom fail of bringing on Death or Distraction. Nothing was ever more deserving wonder, than that this wretched Lady did not lay violent hands on her own Life : but tho' she wish'd to die, she forbore being guilty of that Act of Horror : Whenever the Confusion

76 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

of her Thoughts permitted her the power of Consideration, she would begin to cast about what Course to take; but then the Impossibility there seem'd of her being able to find any, whereby she might conceal her Shame, plunged her afresh into Disorders, which at some times were very little different from Madness. The Cruelties she inflicted on herself in private, such as tearing her Hair and Flesh, fasting, passing whole Nights together on the Floor; and instead of Rest, giving her self wholly up to the bitter Anguish of her Soul, would be too tedious, and too melancholy an Account! How terribly she was abandon'd to Despair; and how little she regarded what might befall her, is evident, when the Effects of her now dearly repent-ed Passion, began to grow too great for Concealment. Taking the Opportunity of the *Nunnery* being on some Occasion open, she went out in the Habit she was in, without having taken any thought where to go, or to whom she should apply; it was pretty late in the Evening, and the Dusk favour'd her from being taken any notice of; till coming into a great Street where were many Passengers, the sight of them at a distance gave her so much of Thought, as to be apprehensive of being seen, and known; the Cathedral Church therefore of *our Lady* being near, she stepped into the *Porch*, and sitting down in a corner of it, by that means conceal'd herself from the Observation of any body: But what avail'd it, that when the Darkness coming on, the Streets were intirely free, she could direct her Steps to no Place, but where either Shame, or the height of her Spirit would not suffer her to go: yet still keeping up her Resolution, that whatever became of her, and whatever should be the Consequence of her wandering, she never would consent to receive the smallest Shelter or Protection from the ungrateful *EMILIUS*; she left her Covert, and began her Journey,

tho'

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tho' she was insensible where she went, and wholly incapable of designing any thing : Chance therefore it was which guided her to that part of the Town which led into the great Road to a Village called *Aine* : The Knowledge where she now was, for being unaccustomed to walk, made her but little acquainted with the Streets, gave her a kind of a fullen Satisfaction ; she car'd not whither she went, so she went out of *Madrid* ; and the force of that Desire, strengthen'd her to get a good way from it, before she found herself incapable of going farther : But at last, Weariness and Faintness got the better of Inclination ; she could no longer pursue her Pilgrimage, and was constrained to lie down to take such Rest as she could in the High-way — To add to her present Hardship, which considering the Condition she was in, was such as no Woman but herself, perhaps, ever sustained with Life ; it began to rain so excessively, that in a very few Minutes she was wet to the Skin ; the Shower was succeeded by a Storm of Wind, and such dreadful Claps of Thunder, as might have struck the most courageous Heart with Dread — But not all the Horrors of this Hurricane, made more terrible by the darkness of the Night, and the forlorn Silence of the Place — Not all she endur'd from its Fury, had the power to make her recede from that Resolution she had form'd, or wish for Shelter from *EMILIUS*. But in the midst of this dismal Scene, Fortune seem'd to offer her a Gleam of Comfort, as she was lying, her tender Limbs exposed to all the Rage of the un pitying Elements, and pouring forth Tears almost as fast as the Sky did Rain ; she perceiv'd, when she least expected it, a Light which seem'd to be in a House not far off. She had so much of Self-Preservation left, as to endeavour to make up to it, which with much ado, numb'd and faint as she was, she did at last ; she found it as she wish'd,

78 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

wish'd, a little Cottage, for had it been any other, she would rather have continued as she was, than gone to ask Relief where there was a Probability of being known. The poor good Woman of it, who was sitting up tending a sick Child, receiv'd her with as much Hospitality as the Place and her Circumstances would afford: She pluck'd off her wet Clothes, and gave her a Gown of her own to put on, made a Fire, and brought her the best Refreshments she had.——But alas! the discontented EMANUELLA was little capable of tasting any, which her kind Hostess perceiving, and guessing by her Garb and Mien that she was a Person little accustomed to such Hardships, intreated to know what had occasioned her travelling alone on foot, and at such a dreadful Hour and Season. This Enquiry threw her unhappy Guest into such Returns of over-pressing Grief, that it was a long time before she could make any Answer; but when she had enough recovered herself to do it, she told her the truth of her having made her Escape from the *Monastery*, only concealing the Reasons why she did so, and her Name: But the Woman having had many Children herself, suspected the former, and pitied her extreamly; she would fain have persuaded her to go to Bed, but the other would not consent; and only throwing herself cross it, she pass'd the remainder of the Night in most bitter Lamentations. When Morning came, she begg'd that she might have those Clothes which had been lent her, believing it might serve as a sufficient Disguise, if by any Accident she should be seen by any that knew her; and told the Woman, she should not only have hers in Exchange, but some Money to boot.—— To which the other willingly consented, not only because of her own Profit, but also that believing she was about to prosecute a Journey in which she might be pursued, they might be of service to her. Our unfortunate Traveller
felt

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felt as much Pleasure at this Opportunity of transfiguring herself, as was consistent with her Condition; and designing to go yet farther from *Madrid*, took her Leave. The extream Dirt of the Road made it impossible for her Feet, unused to tread such Ground, to bear her as fast as her Desires would have carried her; but in spite of all she still went on, and without making any stop either to eat or drink, till that day was almost spent. Evening coming on, she went into an *Inn*, believing now she was far enough from Discovery—— Nature beginning to accuse her that she had acted an inhuman Part to the unborn Innocent within her, who bore its share in all the Hardships she endured; she order'd something to be got ready for her to eat, of which having taken as much as her distracted Thoughts would give her leave to do, she went to Bed, and endeavour'd to compose herself.—— The extream Weakness she was in, overcoming all those Perturbations which had so long kept her waking, she fell into a sound Sleep, and in the Morning found her Mind as well as Body had been very much refresh'd by it.—— She began to consider seriously what it was best for her to do; and that natural Vivacity and Spirit, which had already carried her through so many Difficulties, now by degrees returning, gave her hopes she should also get through this, with less Trouble than her Despair had at first suggested—— and resolving to run no farther into Inconveniencies, such as she had pass'd in that little Time since she had left the *Monastery*, she hir'd a couple of *Mules* and a Guide to conduct her to the next *Town*, which she was inform'd was *Alcala*: From that she design'd for *Guadalaxara*, because she thought the other not so far distant from *Madrid*, but that Don JABIN, to whom there was a Necessity she must send for Money, might send some Person to know the Reasons of her coming away in so strange

80 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

a manner. — Reason having now regain'd its force, she no sooner had formed this Design, than she began to put it in execution; and the People of the House furnishing her with *Mules* and a Guide, she got safely to *Alcala*, and from thence to *Guadalaxara*, without any thing happening in her Journey worthy of Remark; unless it were that she, who but a day or two before had so wholly given herself up to Despair, that she seem'd to dare all kind of Miseries, now appeared as careful of her Life, as before she had been the contrary: But this will not be thought strange by any one, who considers how impossible it is for the Excess of any Passion to continue; a weak Constitution, accompanied by a mean Judgment, it immediately destroys, and Death or Madness is the Consequence, as it happened in the Case of Don PEDRO. But EMANUELLA had a more than ordinary Strength as well of Nature as of Reason, to struggle with the Torrent of her, for a time, impetuous Grief; which at last enabled her to overcome it, at least so far as 'twas requisite for Self-preservation, of which for a time she had seem'd wholly regardless.

WHEN she was arrived at *Guadalaxara*, she took Lodgings in a private House; pretending that she had a Husband whom she expected to follow her in a little time; and to prevent all possibility of a Discovery, told the People her Name was MERCINA. She took the same prudent Care also in the Directions she sent to Don JABIN, writing to him in this manner:



To

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TO Don JABIN.

THE many Proofs I have received of your Friendship, would oblige me to conceal nothing from you, were there no other Person but my self concerned — I entreat, therefore, that you will believe I made a Secret of leaving the Pourclairs not out of Choice, but Necessity; and as such, vouchsafe to pardon it. — My Affairs requiring an immediate Supply of Money, I beg you will remit in Bills to the value of about two Hundred Crowns, and direct them to be receiv'd by Donna MERCINA, at Guadalaxara, near which place I am; that Lady is my particular Friend, and will not fail to do me Justice in the Trust I repose in her — I desire also that you will write under a Cover to her, an Account of your's and your good Family's Welfare, for which I shall ever most ardently petition Heaven; being (however my present Circumstances may oblige me to appear the contrary) in the sincerest manner,

Don JABIN's

Most affectionate Kinswoman,
and devoted Servant,

EMANUELLA.

P. S. I doubt not but your accustomed Goodness will still extend it self so far in my favour, as to silence whatever Aspersions may happen to be cast on my leaving the Monastery so suddenly, by seeming to have been privy to it, and that it was for no other Reason than the too great Severities practis'd by that Order.

SHE

82 *The RASH RESOLVE: Or,*

SHE might have omitted this last Request: She was no sooner miss'd, than the true Reason of her Departure was blazed abroad. One of the *Nuns*, being more quick-sighted than the rest, had discovered her Condition; and after she was gone, related it to the whole Convent. What is in the Mouths of such a Number, especially of that Sex, which is seldom bless'd with Secrecy, and of that Sort too who have little else to employ their time with, cannot be expected to be with-held from the Knowledge of all who have any Conversation with them. *EMILIUS* among the rest was inform'd of it, which very much help'd to confirm him in the Opinion that all *BERILLIA* had said concerning her Conduct was true: Judging of her Actions by that of the generality of Women, few of whom would have known themselves to be in the Circumstance she was, without acquainting the Person chiefly obliged to pity, with the Misfortune. — He doubted not therefore but that it had happened by him, whom that Monster of Treachery had told him had supplanted him in her Affections, and that that was the Reason she had never written to upbraid the Change of his Humour in his Addresses to *JULIA*, as he imagined she would have done, if she had been innocent herself. — And these Conjectures, which tho' in reality the most injurious that could be, appeared so reasonable, that they entirely destroy'd all those small Remains of Tenderness, his new Desire for an Object yet unenjoy'd, had left him: And now entirely devoted to *JULIA*, and to the Advantages he propos'd by marrying her, left nothing undone which might engage her to consent. — She who was half won before-hand, and had only made some faint Denials for Form's sake, easily suffered herself to seem over-persuaded to follow her Inclinations; and they were married in great Solemnity,
in

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in a very little time after EMANUELLA had departed from *Madrid*.

BUT Don JABIN, who had but too true a guess at the State of her Affairs, and made no doubt but that EMILIUS was the Man to whom she ow'd her Undoing, forbore to aggravate her Afflictions by sending her any Intelligence either of what was talk'd of concerning her self, or of the Marriage of her Lover: But sending her the Money which she desir'd, and which he easily believ'd she wanted, writ no more to her, than to entreat she would continue to let him hear from her; and that as soon as her Affairs would permit, she would return to *Madrid*.

THIS Supply, and the Belief that every Body she had left behind her, were as entirely ignorant of her Circumstances as she could wish, made her as easy in them, as could possibly be expected. Her Courage and usual Fortitude now, with such Success exerted themselves, that she waited the dreadful Hour, which she knew was shortly to arrive, with all the Resignation and Patience imaginable; and at the appointed time brought a Son into the World, who, from the Moment of his Birth, seem'd to promise he would be an Ornament to it.

I am of Opinion, that the greatest part of my Female Perusers, will imagine this unfortunate Lady could regard a Child, whose begetting had cost her so many Tears, but with Indifference, and that she must have look'd on him with more Remorse than Tenderness; but EMANUELLA, as most of her Notions were vastly different from those of the generality of her Sex, so were they also in this. Had the Ceremony of the Church made EMILIUS as much her Husband, as by his Vows he ought to have acknowledg'd himself; and had he never swerv'd in the least tittle from that Constancy he had sworn to maintain inviolable,

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ble, or that Ardency of Passion which he once profess'd, she could not have lov'd his Son with greater Fondness—Never did maternal Tenderness reach to a height more elevated than her's—A thousand Lives she would have thought well given to have preserv'd this Darling of her Soul—All the Ignominy which this Adventure, if divulg'd, would bring upon her, was now no longer a Concern to her—Even Virtue was become less dear; and she could scarce repent she had been guilty of a Breach of it, so much she priz'd the Effect—and it would only have been with Transports of unconceivable Affection she had beheld the lovely Babe, if the Reflection how little it was in her power to do for him, had not sometimes given a check to the Pleasure she took in calling him her own.—She felt, indeed, all the Mother's Joy, but with it infinitely more Care than ordinarily attends that Title, and was, as it were, divided in her Thoughts between excess of *Rapture*, and excess of *Pain*.—But however severe the intervals of the *latter* might be, she was sufficiently invigorated by the *former*, to be able to sustain them; and while she had her dear-lov'd Infant in her Arms, and uninterrupted, gaz'd upon his growing Beauties, nor felt immediate want of any Necessary either for him or herself, she had not the power to think too deeply of what future Miseries might befall her; but her ever-varying Fortune, which would not suffer her to continue long in any settled State of Life, made a sudden Change in her Affairs, which oblig'd her to other Considerations than those which at present took up her Mind.

THE ungrateful BERILLIA, who, as I have before taken notice, had been sent from *Madrid* under the Government of a *Duenna*, some little time before EMANUELLA left the *Pourclairs*; where she was carried, was kept a Secret to every Body;

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for the Cause of her being banished her Father's House, being her Intrigue with a Person he could not approve, he resolv'd to take the most prudent Measures that he could, to prevent the place of her Retirement being discover'd. The Person in whose Charge she was intrusted, had a Sister who liv'd at a small Village call'd *Tortol*, within a short Mile of *Guadalaxara*, and there she was to be conceal'd for some time. He had as good as made an Agreement for her going into the *Convent* of *Franciscans*; but as he could not be certain, but that she might be in the same Circumstances with her unfortunate Cousin, he was willing to be convinced to the contrary, before her Entrance; and for that purpose plac'd her at this Distance from *Madrid*, where whatever happen'd might be conceal'd. The Place where she was kept being so near *Guadalaxara*, he writ to MORENA, for that was the Name of her who was appointed Guardian over his Daughter, to make a little Journey thither. He order'd her to enquire for a Woman call'd MERCINA, and endeavour by her means, if possible, to come to the Speech of EMANUELLA; but if that could not be accomplish'd, to inform herself of the Truth of her Affairs, and give him an Account. This Letter happening to be brought when MORENA was out of the way on some Business, BERILLIA took it in; and knowing it to be her Father's Hand, broke it open. — She had, ever since she had been there, thought of nothing, but how she should get away: and was over-joy'd to find EMANUELLA was so near, resolving to take this Opportunity of making her Escape to her, not doubting but the Power the other's mistaken Friendship had given her over her, would furnish her with Arguments to prevail on her to act according to her Desires. She was kept entirely without Money; and the Belief that she was far from any Body who either could
or

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or would furnish her with means of making an Escape, in case she should desire it, made her be watched with much less Circumspection than otherwise she would have been, and she had an Opportunity to go out of the House the very Day she had intercepted the Letter. The Weather favour'd her Design, and it being but a small Walk to *Guadalaxara*, she easily reach'd it before Sun-set.

EMANUELLA had not yet recover'd Strength enough to rise, and was prodigiously surpriz'd when she was told a Lady of a good Appearance enquir'd for Donna MERCINA, and would not be deny'd the Privilege of speaking with her.—She had contracted no Acquaintance in that Place, and could not imagine on what account a Stranger should seem so pressing to see her.—But the People of the House acquainting her that they had already made all the Excuses they could for the Condition she was in, and that every thing was ineffectual to get rid of her, she was at last oblig'd to give leave for her Admittance. The Room was made pretty dark, and the Bed-Curtains clos'd, as is usual in such Cases: So that BERILLIA could not discern who it was she was about to speak to; but desiring that all who were in the Room might leave it, she address'd her in this manner: Donna MERCINA, *said she*, there is but one Excuse I can alledge for this Intrusion, but that I hope will be a sufficient one: I doubt not but you are acquainted with the Force of Friendship, and will not think it strange that to prove its Sincerity will carry one to greater lengths than this—I am inform'd it is in your power to let me know where I may find Donna EMANUELLA, a Daughter of the late Governor of *Porto-Rico*. Never was there a more tender Regard between Persons of the same Sex, than that which my Soul paid to this Lady, and which I flatter my self I
was

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was favour'd with from her; but some Accidents have for a long time depriv'd me of the Blessing of her Conversation; nor 'till this Day, could I for many Months get the least Intelligence in what Part of the World it was I might hope to find her—I intreat you therefore to direct my Search—I am satisfied she will not take it ill when you shall tell her it is to BERILLIA, her Cousin and her Friend, that you have made this Condescension—The Astonishment that EMANUELLA was in, to find it was she (for she immediately knew her Voice) kept her from interrupting her 'till she came to these Words; but then the Joy she felt at this Recovery of a Friend so long lost, and whom she thought so perfectly in her Interest, broke out in these Expressions—Can it be possible! *cry'd she, throwing open the Curtains,* has Heaven in compassion of my Sufferings sent my dear BERILLIA to me?—Come to my Arms, my best, my only Friend! EMANUELLA will ever bless the Day which brought thee here—'Tis on thy faithful Breast I may pour out the secret Anguish of my Soul—'Tis from thee I may assure my self of both Advice and Consolation—Thou who *Lovest* will *Pity* me.—A thousand such like Demonstrations of the sincerest Welcome she did give her, which the other return'd (as soon as the Consternation, at the finding her so much sooner than she expected, was a little over) with all the seeming Truth, and tenderest Love imaginable: And what was yet more obliging to her than any thing she could say to herself, she kiss'd and embrac'd the Child with an Ardour so like Sincerity, that one who had less Confidence in her might easily have mistook for it. When the first Raptures of this meeting would permit them to talk of Business, they began to relate to each other all the Particulars of their Adventures since last they parted: But when EMANUELLA heard by what
means

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means BERILLIA had been directed to enquire for her, and had read the Letter Don JABIN had sent to MORENA, she found she had but flatter'd herself with an Opinion that the Cause of her removal from *Madrid* had been a Secret, and could not forbear expressing how nearly she was touch'd at the loss of that Reputation she had taken so much pains to preserve. And this Regret was of excellent service to further a Contrivance which the wicked BERILLIA had form'd. She presently began to dissuade her from all thoughts of ever returning to *Madrid*: Nor, *said she*, since Don JABIN is so diligent in his Inquiries, can you be any longer in private here; tho' I have been so fortunate in intercepting one Letter, he will undoubtedly write again——MORENA knows you, and in the Person of MERCINA will EMANUELLA be discover'd, and every Circumstance of this Affair related. I would advise you, since, when one is determin'd to be conceal'd, all Places are alike, to call in what Money you have in my Father's Hands, and quitting *Guadalaxara* with all possible Expedition, settle in some other Town.—For my part, if I had less reason to fly from a Father from whom I now no more can hope for Favour, my love for you will oblige me to banish all other Considerations, and continue with you 'till Death enforces a Separation.—The again deceiv'd EMANUELLA highly approv'd of this Advice, and thank'd her for it, and for the Offer she made of living with her, in Terms which the Intentions of the other were far from meriting. Since she had resolv'd to proceed in this manner, the other reminded her, that she must not delay it; because if they tarried till the Account of her making her Escape from MORENA were sent to her Father, it might possibly make him suspect his Letter had fallen into her Hands, and that they were together.—Nothing could be more
natural

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natural that this Supposition; and for that reason EMANUELLA dispatch'd a Letter to him immediately with a demand of a thousand Crowns, that being the best part of what was her Due; not doubting but by the time it would come to her Hands, she should be able to take a Journey. BERILLIA also writ a Letter at the same time to her Lover, but the Contents of it she took care to conceal from her Cousin, only telling her it was to upbraid him for the many Misfortunes her Passion for him had occasion'd her. After the Letters were gone, and they had concluded on every thing proper for their Expedition, they began to make what Preparations they could for it, that when the Answers should come, they might have nothing to do, but to depart.—EMANUELLA had her young Son baptized by the Name of VICTORINUS: A Nurse was provided for him, whose Circumstances would permit her to go with them to any Place they should make choice of; Mules and a Man-Servant to attend them were hired, and every thing contriv'd, so as to be ready at a Moment's Warning.

How unkindly soever Don JABIN might take it, that EMANUELLA, who ow'd the being Mistress of so much Money wholly to his Intercession, seem'd to think him unworthy of her Confidence, which way she design'd to dispose either of that or herself, he did not fail to send it: and tho' her good Sense and the Gratitude of her Nature, gave her some Shocks at treating him in this manner; yet the Artifice of the Treacherous BERILLIA, join'd to the innumerable Perplexities of her Mind, prevented them from taking so great Root in her Reflections, as otherwise they would have done.

ALCALA was the Place they had agreed to go to, not only because they were both of them entirely unknown to any Body there, but also, that
it

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it being famous for Learning, EMANUELLA thought the young VICTORINUS, when he grew up fit to receive it, might have all the Advantages of it, without her being oblig'd to send him from her sight; a Misfortune, which her Tenderness for him made appear to be the most dreadful that cou'd possibly befall her: And tho' it being much nearer to *Madrid* than the Place they were in, yet both of them resolving to take up other Names, they might live there with as little danger of Discovery as in any other City.

IT being Evening when they set out, they lay that Night at an Inn about the mid-way: EMANUELLA, who was too fond of her little VICTORINUS to suffer him to be one Moment from her sight, would needs have his *Nurse* the Partner of her Bed, and BERILLIA had one to herself in another Chamber. Tho' on vastly different Subjects, both these Ladies had sufficient to employ their Minds. — One pass'd away the restless Hours in Contemplation on the many turns of Fortune she had known, and in imploring Heaven, that where she now was going she might find a Settlement for Life. — The other was applauding her good Genius, for furnishing her with Artifice to bring about almost whatever she undertook; and flattering herself with a thousand Joys in store, all owing to her own Wit, her own Fertility of Invention, and Perfection in the Art of Dissimulation.

IT was very early in the Morning when EMANUELLA rose, and having order'd the Mules to be got ready, went herself to awake her Cousin; but was not a little surpriz'd, when coming into her Chamber, she was already up, and gone out: however, imagining no more than that, not able to sleep, she had rose, and was gone to take a walk either in the Fields or Garden, bade one of the Servants of the House to call her — O Heaven!

said

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said the Fellow to whom she gave this Command, do you not know, that the Lady who last Night came with you is gone?—Gone! cry'd she, what mean you? She can be gone no farther than to take a little Morning Air, therefore prithee make haste to find her, and let her know we are ready to prosecute our Journey. Alas! resum'd he, I fear she has deceiv'd you—I give you my Word, that if she continu'd to ride as she set out, she is, by this time, some Leagues off. EMANUELLA cou'd by these Words think no other than that he who spoke them was mistaken in the Person she enquir'd for, and therefore took the pains to describe her to him: But he presently told her, that he very well knew who it was she meant; that they had no other Guests in the House but those that came with her, and that a young *Chevalier* well-mounted had come by Day-break, and took her away with him. I leave the Reader to judge what an Astonishment this Intelligence must create in the Mind of her who heard it: She was for some time unable to give any Credit to an Information so highly improbable to be true; but when she return'd to her Chamber, and found that not only every thing that belong'd to her was missing, but also a little Cabinet, which she had entrusted to her Charge, in which was contain'd most of the Money she had receiv'd from Don JABIN; 'tis hard to say, whether Amazement for so base and cruel an Action, or Grief for the Misfortunes it must of necessity subject her to, was most predominant in her Soul—to be betray'd, robb'd, and forsaken in so barbarous a manner, by the Person whom of all the World she had placed the greatest Confidence in — to be expos'd with her dear Infant to all the Miseries which attend Poverty — to lose at one Stroke all that she had in the World—No means left her to make the least Provision against Want
and

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and Beggary, was something so shocking, so dreadful, as rendred all her Courage useless. — She went into the Room where *Nurse* was dressing her young Master for his Journey, and the Sight of him made the Reflection of the Loss she had sustain'd more terrible to be born: She had not Words presently to relate what had befallen her: and when the good Woman, easily perceiving by her Countenance that something of ill had happen'd, entreated to know the Matter; she could get no more from her, for a good while than, O *Nurse*, I am undone! — But that, *cry'd she*, is a trivial Woe, that lovely Babe, that Charmer at your Breast, is ruin'd — we must starve, *Nurse*! perish for want of Bread — the little All we had, is lost — no means is left us for Support — no Hope but in the Grave. — With these and the like Exclamations did she make the other sensible, something very unfortunate had happen'd; but what it was, she was far from being able to guess; 'till her Mistress having a little more recollected herself, at last acquainted her with the whole Story. Never did any one bear a greater part in the Sufferings of another, than did this faithful Creature in those of *EMANUELLA*; the Affability and Kindness with which she had been treated by her, had gain'd as great an Interest in her Affections in the short time she had been with her, as tho' she had been bred up with her; and then her Tendernefs for the young *VICTORINUS*, was more than equal to that which Mothers ordinarily feel for their own Children. — She join'd in all her Lamentations, and vented ten thousand Curses on the perfidious and ungrateful Cause of them: But perceiving that this rather encreased the Distraction of *EMANUELLA*, than any way comforted her, she began to change her Talk, begging her to be as easy as she could, and to proceed in her Journey to *Alcala*; and having en-

quir'd

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quir'd which way BERILLIA and her Conductor took, and being inform'd, they went towards that Town, she endeavour'd to inspire her with a hope that they might be heard of there.—There was indeed but little probability in this Conjecture; but as this was not a Place to continue in, the distress'd Lady thought she might as well go there as to any other Place; and complying with the Persuasions of her *Nurse*, they left the Inn, and in a short time arriv'd at *Alcala*.

NURSE's Predictions had so much of Truth in them, that on Enquiry they found that such Persons as those they sought had pass'd through the City, but had staid no longer than to take a small Refreshment, and were gone on the Road to *Madrid*.—To send any body after them EMANUELLA knew would be in vain; because it was impossible they would tarry there, on the account of Don JABIN: therefore she was obliged to sit down with the Misfortune without the least Hope she should ever have any Reparation for it; but with what racking Reflections, those who will but give themselves the trouble of thinking what a Woman in her Circumstances must feel, will be better able to judge, than all the Descriptions I could give, would make them.

WHAT now could this unhappy Lady do? She was in a Place where she was entirely unacquainted, tho' that she was so, was the only Consolation she had; she had no means of providing for herself and little Family, and when the Charges of her Journey were defrayed, had scarce any Money remaining—No Condition sure was ever so calamitous as her's——Her Spirits had doubtless sunk beneath the weight of Sorrow, which oppress'd her, if the Vigour of her Care for her dear Child had not kept them up.—Something must be thought on for the procuring for *him* the Necessaries of Life, whatever should become of herself—

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herself——and thinking nothing too much to do for him, she threw off the fine Lady, endeavour'd to forget whose Daughter she was, and the Hopes she was bred to, and submitted to the meanest, and most servile Offices for Bread.——She took a little Lodging in the cheapest part of the Town, and leaving her *Nurse* at home to take Care of that which was much dearer to her than all other Consideration, she went every Day to a *Convent* in that City; where doing Services for the *Nuns* in the manner of an *Out* or *Lay-Sister*, she made a shift to get as much as maintain'd them, tho' in a manner which none who had known her before these Misfortunes came upon her, could have believ'd she could have liv'd to endure. But what will not Love enable one to go through! what Difficulties are so great but Inclination can surmount! She condescended to every thing with Chearfulness, for the sake of VICTORINUS; and while she fed her longing Eyes with gazing on his Infant-Charms, and clasped the lovely Innocent in her Arms, she thought herself not wretched; and passing all the Night in that sweet Employment, forgot the Hardships of the Day. In spite of the real Coldness with which she had been treated by EMILIUS, and the monstrous Ingratitude and Baseness she had been made to believe him guilty of, her Soul still confess'd the Graces of his Person; his Image was too deeply impress'd in her Mind, ever to banish it thence, tho' effac'd and blotted by the Memory of his Crimes. The little VICTORINUS had Features so perfectly resembling his, that there wanted but Age to make them appear the same; and this Likeness not a little added to the Fondness she otherwise had for him. All the Passion she once had for the *Father*, was now transmitted to the *Son*; which join'd to the soft Care which all who are *Mothers* feel, rais'd her's to the most elevated Pitch that Humanity is capable of being inspir'd with.

BUT

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BUT, to prosecute the melancholy History of her Misfortunes ; she had languish'd away (for it could not be call'd living) seven or eight Months at *Alcala* in the manner already represented, without seeing, or being seen by any body she knew ; but 'tis probable the one might be owing to the little notice she took of every thing but what concern'd her Business, and the other to the Station she was in, so far different from that in which any one would have imagin'd to have found the accomplish'd, and once so much ador'd EMANUELLA. But one Day being at the Cloyster-Gate on her usual Employment, she saw a handsome young *Friar* waiting to be admitted to speak with the Abbess ; happening to stay a little longer than was customary, she had an opportunity of considering his Face, and fancying at first sight she knew him, on looking more heedfully, soon discovered him to be Don OCTAVIO, one whom she had formerly many Opportunities of conversing with at the House of Don JABIN, and whom she since had heard had fought with EMILIUS on the account of Donna JULIA. Curiosity made her enquire of some of the *Nuns*, who she perceiv'd knew him, what had been the occasion of his becoming one of the *Religious* ; and was told by them, that it was occasion'd by Despair : that Honour preventing him from attempting any thing against a Rival who had given him his Life, he forsook the World as soon as his hopes were at an end, by the Marriage of JULIA with the Count ; and that the *Abbess* of that Nunnery being his Aunt, he came there to pay his Duty as he pass'd thro' *Alcala* in his way to some other part of the Country. EMANUELLA had experienc'd too much of Love and Despair, to be surpriz'd at the Effect she found those Passions had caus'd in him ; and it was with compassion only she reflected on a Change so little to be expected from that Gaiety, which he

was

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was once the most fam'd for of any *Chevalier* in *Madrid*. She was highly satisfy'd however in her Mind, that her Dress, and the Alteration of her Circumstances had so much disguis'd her, that a Person who had been so perfectly acquainted with her Face, should now have any notion he had seen it before, and began to live with more security in her thought, that she might continue undiscover'd, tho' she should happen to be seen even by *EMILIUS* himself, the Person of all the World from whom, as she then was, she most desir'd to be conceal'd. But alas! it was not ordain'd for this unhappy Woman to have any part of her Wishes compleated; she but hoped to live and die in this forlorn Obscurity, and that also was deny'd her: It was but a few days after she had seen *OCTAVIO*, that a Lady, call'd Donna *JACINTA* del *FLOREZADA*, a young Widow of a vast Estate, who us'd frequently to come and pass some Hours in conversation with the Nuns, desir'd to speak with her; she had often seen her at the *Convent*, and taking more notice of the Delicacy of her Hands and Complexion, the Sweetness of her Voice, and the graceful Manner in which delivered her Words, than many others who had the same opportunity of observing her, imagin'd she had been educated in a fashion which might deserve a better State of Life than what she at present liv'd in; and having some young Children, believ'd she might be a proper Person for a Governess: She discours'd her on that Head, and putting many questions to make tryal of her Capacity, found it so infinitely beyond what even her good Opinion had suggested, that she immediately made her an offer of coming into her House, and assur'd her of Usage more like a Sister than a Servant.

THIS Proposal, tho' an extraordinary Favour, (for Donna *JACINTA* was not only one of the greatest, but best Woman in the Place) was not altogether

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altogether so agreeable to EMANUELLA as the other expected, ——— In the first place, she knew not how to part with that dear Babe, whom as yet she had never been absent from one Night, and whom her very Soul was wrapt in, ——— And in the next, she was unwilling to go into a Family where she knew there was always a great Variety of Company, for fear some one or other might happen to know her. ——— The first of these Reasons she made no scruple of acquainting Donna JACINTA with, and the other she palliated, by saying she was of a Disposition too melancholy to endure the sight of many People; and for that cause fear'd she might be unfit for the Employment she would engage her in. ——— But the obliging Lady would not be deny'd by any means; she had taken a fancy to her, and was resolv'd to have her: she told her she commended the Love and Care she seem'd to have of her Child, and that she would be far from endeavouring to alienate an Affection so praise-worthy, or make her unhappy by taking her from that which she so dearly priz'd. You shall have your Child with you, *said she*, both that and a Nurse to look after it shall be as welcome as your self; and as it grows up, I will undertake to give him an Education equal to my own: And as for your other Objections, tho' I think Company the best relief for Melancholy, I will not press you to come into it ——— You shall see no body but those whom you think fit. ——— Nor will I exact any thing from you, but what shall be agreeable to your own Inclinations. There appeared so uncommon a Good-Nature and Frankness in this Lady, as well as Advantage in the Offer she made her, that EMANUELLA must have thought herself both her own and Child's Enemy to have refused it. ——— She accepted it therefore with all the Acknowledgements of Gratitude imaginable, and immediately went home to put her

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in as good a Capacity as she could, to return to this kind Patroness for good and all. Her poor Nurse was over-joy'd when she heard the News; and every thing being ready in a few Hours, all the little Family remov'd from daily Care, Scarcity, and sometimes Want, to Ease, Plenty, and Chearfulness: They were receiv'd with a Welcome far beyond their Expectations; had an Apartment assign'd for them, as tho' they had been Guests, not to be continued Inmates of the House: the Servants were order'd to treat EMANUELLA, who had now given herself the Name of PLACILLIA, with all the respect imaginable, and her Nurse with the same Kindness, as if it were there own young Master she attended. Donna JACINTA was so far from promising more than she intended to perform, that on the contrary her Words came infinitely short of her Deeds. Nor was she of that flashy uncertain Temper which some People are of, tho' accounted Good-humour'd too, of being one day extravagantly fond of those they call Friends, and the next scarce owning they have any such Acquaintance: She was always the same, always in one Temper, unless it were, that her Affections seem'd every day to encrease to her new Companion; but that is little to be wonder'd at, since this unhappy Fair had a stock of Charms in her Conversation and Behaviour, which were not to be discover'd all at once: The Amendment in her manner of living made also so great a one in her Looks, that she was hardly to be known for the Person who us'd to be employ'd in Messages, or whatever other mean Office the Nuns had no more discernment than to put her to. ——— She now began to resume her former Charms, and appear again herself. JACINTA perceiving her Skill in Musick, Painting, Philosophy, and all those Accomplishments which few but those of Quality can afford, or at least take the pains to have their Children

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dren instructed in, could not be persuaded but that she was of Noble Descent, and frequently sollicit-ed her to give her the History of her Life; but the other could not be prevail'd upon to relate more than that her Father was a Gentleman in a distant part of *Spain*, and that by marrying against his Consent to a Person who was now dead, she had been reduced to many Misfortunes. This was a Story she had fram'd for all who enquired into her Affairs; nor cou'd all the kindness of this Lady oblige her to reveal the Truth: Her *Nurse* was also extremely faithful to the Trust she had reposed in her, nor ever divulged the least Hint of those Affairs she knew, which, tho' but a small part, was yet enough to have made all that her Mistress had said appear fabulous.

THUS did she live as happy as a Person can live, who lives dependent on the Favour of another: that good Lady took care to confer her Obligations in such a manner, that they should be as little as possible uneasy to the Receiver; and the other was so sensible of her Favours, that she at length became her's as much thro' Inclination as Duty. — She had continu'd with her about a Year without any thing happening of moment, and she was beginning to think Fortune was grown weary of persecuting her, and would permit her to continue in that Asylum of Tranquility which she now enjoy'd: She had no reason to imagine she should not live and die with this kind Friend; and the Experience of her Goodness to herself, gave her a certainty that the young VICTORINUS would find the Effects of it in as full a manner as if she were to live. — She would often talk to Donna JACINTA in this manner, who, tho' she never heard her without renewing the Promises she had before made her, yet she endeavour'd to put her off from such kind of Discourses, because she thought them a kind of Food to that Melancholy

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choly she seem'd but too much to give way to. They were sitting together one day, when a Gentleman and Lady, attended by a great number of Servants, alighted at the Gate, which oblig'd Donna JACINTA to go to receive them: EMANUELLA continu'd in her Chamber, the other perceiving how much averse she was to be seen by any body but the Family, had for a good while left solliciting her to come into Company; but she had not now remain'd long alone, before she came running into the Room, desiring her she would oblige her so far as to come down — she told her the Persons that came to visit her were her near Relations, and that the Lady, who was most passionately fond of her Husband, and had no Children by him, had happen'd to see the little VICTORINUS at play in the Garden, and imagin'd him so like her Lord, that she express'd a prodigious Impatience to see the Mother. It would be impossible to represent the Perturbations of EMANUELLA's Soul all the time she heard her speak — she began to think of something, tho' at present she could not well tell of what — a sort of distant Guess — a wild Notion of a Possibility of some wonderful Event — a thousand incoherent unconnected Ideas ran in an instant thro' her Mind, and almost threw her into a Swoon. Donna JACINTA was extremely surpriz'd to find so sudden an Alteration in her Countenance, and ask'd her if she were not well. — No, Madam (*answer'd she, scarce able to speak*) and therefore intreat you would excuse my appearing before this Company. I know not how to do it (*resum'd the other*) since they are so very pressing, but will endeavour it at your Request — tho' I could wish (*added she*) that I could prevail on you: the Lady who is my Cousin Germain, is marry'd to a Count of the Empire, and it may be prodigiously in their power to — She had

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opportunity to say no more, the Person she was speaking to, was now incapable of hearing her, and fallen at her Feet on the Floor, quite senseless. — Amaz'd as she was, she omitted nothing for her Recovery, and throwing Water on her Face, soon brought her to herself; but the Torrent of Tears which gush'd from her Eyes, as soon as she open'd them — the Sighs, which at her return of Breath seeming as tho' they would exhaust it quite, made the good-natur'd Observer half stupify'd with Grief and Wonder: Nothing was more apparent, than that she had been brought into this Condition only by her being press'd to go into this Company; and not being able to guess the reason of it, and perceiving she did not go about to speak it — For Heaven's sake, *said she*, what have I said to occasion this Confusion of your Soul? or what has Count EMILIUS, or Donna JULIA done, which should render their Presence so hateful to you? These Words, which so entirely confirm'd her in those Suggestions which already had work'd such sad Effects, were very near throwing her again into those Faintings from which she had so lately been recover'd — but mustering up all the Spirit she had left to stand this Shock, which of all that had befallen her, seem'd the most terrible, she flung herself at the Feet of Donna JACINTA, and with trembling Hands catching hold of her Robe, O pardon me, (*said she, in scarce intelligible Accents*) pardon me, most excellent Lady, that I have abus'd your Goodness with a feign'd Tale — I am not the Person I pretended, but a Wretch unworthy of your Favour — a Wretch, who by one fatal Crime has drawn down all the stor'd Vengeance of high Heaven on her — But, as you have hitherto been so divinely kind — O cast me not off at once — Expose me not to Horrors worse than Death — than Hell — O save me from the Sight

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of EMILIUS, and you shall hereafter be made sensible of the whole Truth of my unhappy Story. Here she stopp'd, and Donna JACINTA was about to make some Reply, when she was prevented, by the sudden coming in of EMILIUS and his Lady, with the young VICTORINUS in her hand: The Surprize they were in, that JACINTA stay'd so much longer than they expected, their Impatience to see the Mother of a Child whom both of them were so much charm'd with, made them take the Liberty, being told which Room she was in, of coming up. EMANUELLA being opposite to the Door, had the opportunity of seeing them first; and in the instant Distraction that View gave her, incapable of any Thought but how to shun it, a Window by Accident being open, she flew to it, and crying out, *Fate thou hast done thy worst!* was very near throwing herself out of it, if Donna JACINTA, who, tho' equally surpriz'd, had her Thoughts more prepar'd for such an Adventure, had not been very quick in catching hold of her. EMILIUS, who at once saw EMANUELLA and her Despair, stood for some Moments like one depriv'd of Motion——

No Words can reach what 'twas he felt at an Object so unexpected! so alarming! — the most strong Surprize, the most violent Grief, the most passionate Tenderness at once possess'd him, and he was as unable to express the Force of either, as I am to describe it.

DONNA JULIA, who had but one Passion to struggle with, soon overcame that enough to ask her Cousin JACINTA, what had occasioned the Confusion she beheld, and her own Consternation? But that Lady, who still held the afflicted EMANUELLA in her Arms at the other end of the Room, and was endeavouring to persuade her to Moderation, had not leisure to make any Reply to what she said, or to ease her own Wonder,
by

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by enquiring the Source of this Affair; which tho' she guess'd at part of, was far from imagining who EMANUELLA really was, or the Causes she had for Despair. EMILIUS was the only Person who cou'd unfold this Mystery, and believing, that since so much had been discover'd, it were best to reveal the whole, resolv'd to do it, tho' it were so nice a Point, that it requir'd all the Rhetorick he was Master of, to handle without giving Offence to Donna JULIA. He was also divided in his Sentiments, whether it wou'd not more add to the Disorder of EMANUELLA to relate the Story before her Face, or by taking the Company into another Room, leave her in suspense; but after a little debate in his Mind, he at length concluded on the latter as most proper; and drawing nearer to the Place where Donna JACINTA and EMANUELLA were, addressling himself to the former, Madam, *said he*, I believe it will be much better for us to retire, and leave this afflicted Lady to that Repose our continuing here may hinder her from enjoying. I will not, Madam! *added he, turning to the other, and bowing very respectfully,* presume to remain in your Sight, nor return to it 'till those Stains the Treachery of the unworthy BERILLIA have cast on my Character are remov'd — then you will find EMILIUS has not been so blameable, as at present he appears; and will, I hope, admit his Presence without giving him any Tortures by the sight of yours. As much averse as EMANUELLA was to hear him speak, the Name of BERILLIA attracted her Attention — in the midst of her Agonies, in the midst of that Shock of Nature his sudden coming had given her, she would have been pleas'd at finding him not altogether so guilty as she had believ'd him; and fancying there was a possibility that unfaithful Creature had deceiv'd her, in the Representation she had made of him, as well as

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self in other Affairs, would have been contented to have had him repeat what he knew of her; and finding there was now an absolute Necessity of every thing being discover'd, thought the Recital might as well be made before her Face: she felt something at her Heart, which gave her an Assurance she shou'd not long survive to publick an Eclaircissement of what she had done, and was willing to submit to the Shame of it, to gratify her Impatience to acknowledge herself mistaken in condemning the Man, whom to have found innocent she wou'd, a long time ago, have parted with Life. *It, said she,* my Lord! you have any thing to tell me of the Falshood of that wicked Wretch, more than what I am already appriz'd of, I beg it may be no Secret: Set forth in what terms you please her Faults, and my Misfortunes; I am inur'd to Miseries of all kinds, and can endure even this severest Tryal — Perhaps, *continu'd she weeping,* with greater Fortitude than the rest, because it is the last — the last of Horrors I can live to know. She made this Request in such a manner, and accompany'd it with so many Sighs, and such Distortion of her Features while she was speaking, that the Count made a doubt whether it was best for him to comply with it; and 'tis probable wou'd have evaded it, had she not over, and over again, intreated he wou'd relate all he knew, and put a period to the Amazement which his Wife and Donna JACINTA were all this time involv'd in; 'till finding himself press'd past Denial not only by her but by those two Ladies, who, glad she had propos'd it, seconded her Desire, was oblig'd to satisfy their Curiosity; which, after having a little recollected what he was about to disclose, he did in these, or the like Words.

I believe, *said he,* that for the Satisfaction of a here, I need repeat no more than what BERILIA herself confess'd, when happening to be talking

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king the Air, about a Mile from *Madrid*, I saw that unhappy Wretch lying on the Grass, weltring in her Blood, wounded in three or four Places, and almost ready to expire: So sad an Object rais'd all that was compassionate in my Soul; but when I went nearer, in hopes to afford her some Relief, Words wou'd but poorly make you sensible what 'twas I felt at knowing her to be *BERILLIA*, whom I thought one of the sincerest of my Friends. — I began to testify some part of my Concern, by enquiring by what means she had become in that Condition, and offering to bind up her Wounds; but she wou'd not permit me; but discovering all the marks of the most poyntant and terrible Despair that ever was, told me, all Care wou'd be in vain, that she was a dead Woman — and that if there was a Possibility for her Wounds to be healed, she wou'd herself make others, which shou'd be beyond the Power of Art. — And then, perceiving my Amazement at hearing her speak in this manner, You (*cry'd she*) *EMILIUS*, have the least Reason to pity me of all the World — you I have wrong'd in the highest manner. — O! continu'd she, in an Agony so which the Rack is mean, Heaven never can, for the Injustice I have done you, nor the Ruin I have brought on the innocent *EMANUELLA* — both — both of you I have betray'd — traduc'd; and tho' she is the greatest Sufferer, 'tis you appear the only Criminal. She then, on my Intreaty, and Assurance of Pardon for whatever she had done, proceeded to inform me, how cruelly she had accus'd me to you, and confess'd, that all the Intelligence she had given me was false concerning your clandestine Marriage with an inferiour Person, who since grown weary of, you had sent to *Andaluzia*, where he died; of a shameful Intrigue you carry'd on with another, even at the time that you permitted my Addresses; and a thousand such like

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monstrous Inventions, which I do not very well remember; or if I did, shou'd blush to wound your Ears with.

EMANUELLA cou'd not hear the Recital of such vile Accusations without lifting up her Eyes to Heaven, in token of Astonishment, that there cou'd be such Wickedness permitted; but restrained herself from saying any thing to interrupt him: and he went on in this manner.

IT may seem like an idle Excuse, *continu'd the Count*, for me to say in my Defence, that when she endeavour'd to bring me to that Opinion her base Intentions aim'd, she made use of all the Artifice the Devil ever taught, and bound me from revealing, either by Words or Letters, a tittle of what she had said, by Oaths too terrible to be dispens'd with; so I shall only say, before this Lady who is now my Wife, I at that time thought myself too much the Husband of EMANUELLA to have made my Addresses to any other, had not the Stratagems of the false BERILLIA impos'd so artfully on my Belief, as to make me imagine the Engagements between us had been first dissolv'd by you. — But I will not detain your Attention, by alledging any thing in vindication of a Man, whom perhaps, you wish not shou'd be clear'd; and who has it not now in his power to repair the Injuries you have suffer'd on his score. — The dying BERILLIA, as I was about to tell you, had Breath enough to confess all this first part of her Barbarity at large, but her Strength decreasing, she run but slightly over that which she afterwards was guilty of to you, in conspiring with a young Man, whom she for a long time had held a criminal Conversation with, to rob you of that Money she had advis'd you to call out of her Father's hands; — and how the Villain, as she was travelling with him to Toledo, as he had made her hope, had taken it from

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from her, stabb'd her, and left her in that condition in which I found her. ——— The Horrors which seiz'd on this poor Wretch, at the approach of Death, would be too dreadful to describe: Never did I sustain a shock like what the sight of them occasion'd in me; but, base as she had been, I had promis'd her Forgiveness; and indeed, the Penitence she express'd seem'd to deserve it: therefore, after waiting 'till I found she had no longer Sense of Pity or Consolation, I remounted, and rode as fast as I cou'd into the Town, with the melancholy Account of what I had seen and heard to Don JABIN, who, not forgetting she was his Child, tho' a disobedient one, sent Servants to fetch her Body, and bury'd it in a Fashion suitable to her Quality.

HERE EMILIUS concluded his Narration, which, as he expected, put an end to the Wonder this little Company had been in, before they had any guess how PLACILLIA and he had been acquainted: but not only his Wife, but JACINTA had also heard much of EMANUELLA, the Misfortunes which the Avarice of Don PEDRO had subjected her to, ——— the Favour she had found from the King, in obliging him to repair part of the Loss she had sustain'd, ——— the Engagements she had with the Count, ——— their breaking off, ——— her going afterward among the *Pourclairs*, ——— her sudden leaving them; ——— and the Discourse that fill'd the Town for what reason she had been oblig'd to do so. ——— All this was no Secret to either of them, and from the first Discovery that PLACILLIA was EMANUELLA, they ceas'd to be surpriz'd at the Effects of such a meeting: but both of them, as well as EMANUELLA herself, expected he would have taken some notice, in his Discourse, of the little VICTORINUS, who, doubtless, had not been left unmention'd by BERILLIA; and whom, since
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the clearing of his Mother's Innocence, he cou'd make no doubt of being his own Child: ——— but that was a Subject he fear'd wou'd be too shocking to the well-known Nicenels of EMANUELLA's Modesty. ——— Besides, he knew not how his Wife might take a Repetition of what, by many Circumstances, she cou'd not but be sensible of without— But that Lady suspecting the Reasons of his Silence on that head, and willing to shew how much her Soul disdain'd that mean Passion Wives are too liable to fall into; taking EMANUELLA by the Hand, and pressing it with a most obliging Tenderness; Tho', Madam (*said she*) the Count has Charms, which created in me a Wish to become his Wife, long before I had the least Hope of being so; I beg you will believe me, when I protest by all that's sacred, that had I been appriz'd of the Right you had in him, I would have chose to fall a Martyr to Despair, rather than by gratifying my Desires, have been guilty of so much Injustice; nor can I ever yield to be Partaker more of Joys to which you have a superior Claim, unless you vouchsafe to give a Sanction which the Priest had not the power to do: EMILIUS first was yours, — is still yours, by all those Ties which ought to bind an honest Mind; and, if you can forgive the Crime he has been but betray'd to act, I here resign him, and with him, the Tide I have innocently so long usurp'd. ——— EMANUELLA, who had listned with Surprise to this uncommon Generosity, wou'd suffer her to proceed no farther, but interrupting her ——— How glad am I (*said she*) to find before I die, one Woman, whose Excellence of Nature will preserve my Sex from those Imputations the monstrous Wickedness of BERILLIA wou'd else draw on it: ——— But, do not think, most incomparable JULIA, that I have a Soul so little capable of Gratitude, as to abuse such Goodness; ——— EMILIUS is only yours;

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yours, ; whatever Engagements had pass'd between us, I myself dissolv'd. ——— When, by the Loss of my Fortune I thought myself unworthy of his Bed, I relinquish'd all the Right his Vows had given me to him ; and his enfranchis'd Heart was free for you, or any Lady whose Deserts might claim the Prize. ——— I have nothing to accuse him of, and am too much his Friend, not to rejoice that his good Stars directed him, where Beauty join'd with such consummate Virtute cannot fail to give him lasting Happiness. Nothing I cou'd say wou'd be sufficiently Picturest, to paint the various Agitations which perplex'd the Soul of EMILIUS all the time they were speaking ; but the Matter was too delicate for him, to offer at an Interposition ; and not being able to say any thing but what might possibly cause Distaste either in the one or the other, he chose to remain silent, and leave the noble-minded Ladies to decide the generous Contest as they pleas'd : When the admirable JULIA thus prosecuted the Design, which had induc'd her to speak in the manner she had done to EMANUELLA. Since, Madam, (*said she*) either to the Sweetness of your Disposition, which will not suffer you to render a Woman, who, you think, has not sufficient Fortitude to sustain it, miserable by the Loss of all she loves, or to the little Inclination you have to pardon him, who, after the admirable EMANUELLA, cou'd look on any other with a Lover's Eyes : To which soever of these Reasons I am indebted for the continuance of the Name I wear, you must permit me to remind you, there is another Tye, of which you have not the power to disengage EMILIUS : ——— This lovely Infant (*continu'd she, taking VICTORINUS in her Arms*) whom at first sight attracted my Love, must ever be acknowledg'd as the just Heir of all his Father is possess'd of ; ——— and, give me leave also, to regard him with a Mother's Tenderness ;
and

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and how many Children soever Heaven shall be pleas'd to bless me with, make him an equal Sharer with them of all the little Fortune I can call my own. — Nay (*added she, after a little Pause, and perceiving, by her Looks, the Confusion of EMANUELLA'S Soul at these Words*) as a Testimony that you are not displeas'd at the Interest I pretend to take in this little Charmer, you must consent to live with me as a Sister, — as a Friend. —

Here Donna JACINTA (pitying from her Soul the Emotions EMANUELLA must feel at such Obligements from her Rival) thought it was her Place to speak; and interrupting her, No, Cousin, (*said she*) I must put a bar to this last Request; —

I had a Friendship for EMANUELLA, before I knew who she was, and cannot consent to part with her when I find her so much more worthy my Esteem: — She must continue with me 'till Death inforces a Separation. — She was

about to say something more, when EMANUELLA, over-press'd with Shame, with Gratitude, with Tenderness, and perhaps a mixture of another Passion more difficult to be supported than all the rest, had no longer Strength to struggle with the differing Agitations, and sunk fainting in her Chair: It would be hard to say, whether the Care of bringing her to herself, appear'd most zealous in the Endeavours of Donna JULIA, Donna JACINTA, or EMILIUS; the latter of whom, as soon as she was in a Condition of hearing them, said a thousand tender and obliging things to her; nor did the generous Partner of his Bed conceive the least Displeasure at it, but, on the contrary thought he never cou'd express a Sense enough of what that unhappy Lady had suffer'd for him, and wou'd have rejoyc'd that Fate had put it in her power to have afforded her any Consolation: but alas! her Misfortunes were now arriv'd at their utmost height, and soon must know a Period with her Life. —

Resent-

The Untimely DISCOVERY. III

Resentment was all which for a long time had kept the Lamp of Life awake, and that being now extinguish'd in a Flood of softer Passions, the other must of necessity expire. — They soon found she was too much disorder'd for Conversation, and therefore thought it convenient she should be put into a Bed, where perceiving she grew worse, a Physician was sent for to attend; but from the Moment he saw her, he began to doubt any Success of his Prescriptions: In short, she died in three days, of no other Distemper than a broken Heart; equally lamented by Donna JULIA as by EMILIUS and JACINTA: Nor did they, after her Death, take less Care than they had promis'd of young VICTORINUS; each seem'd to out-vye the other in their Fondness of him: He was bred in all the Accomplishments which can adorn a Youth of Quality; and after the Decease of EMILIUS and his generous Lady, who never had any Children herself, was left in possession of the Fortunes of them both, with a considerable Addition from the Friendship of JACINTA: which he makes use of with a Nobleness of Soul, proportionable to the Hopes of those who gave him the Means of expressing it; and is at this day the greatest Ornament of the Kingdom which claims his Birth.



To

The Continually Discover'd

Resurrection was all which for a long time had kept
 the Lamp of Life awake, and that being now
 extinguish'd in a flood of darkness, the other
 must of necessity expire. They then
 thought the way too much obscured for Conso-
 lation, and therefore thought it convenient the
 should be put into a Bed, where privately the
 great work of Physick was left for to attend;
 but from the Moment he saw her, he began to
 doubt any success of his Medicines; in short
 she died in three days, of no other Distemper than
 a broken Heart: especially attended by Death
 as was by Nature and Accident: Nor did
 they after her Death take in less time than they
 had promised of young Victorinus, and
 seem'd to outlive the other in their Torments of
 Pain: He was dead in all the Accomplishments
 which are esteem'd a Youth of Quality, and was
 the Decadence of his Merit, and his Father's Lady
 who never had any Children herself, was her
 portion of the Father of their Door, with a
 considerable Addition from the Goodness of her
 first A: which he makes use of with a Nobleness
 of soul, proposing to himself the hopes of those
 who gave him the means of expelling it, and as
 at this day the greatest Ornament of the Kingdom
 which claims his Birth.



To

THE
MASQUERADERS:

OR,
FATAL CURIOSITY:

Being the *Secret History*
of a late AMOUR.

*What guards the Purity of melting Maids,
In Courtly Balls, and Mid-night Masquerades ;
Safe from the treacherous Friend and daring Spark,
The Glance by Day, and Whisper in the Dark :
When kind Occasion prompts their warm Desires,
When Musick softens, and when Dancing fires !*

POPE.

By Mrs. ELIZA. HAYWOOD.

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DATA CURIOSITATE

of a late Amor.



SAVING ELIXA. HAYWOOD.



To the Right Honourable

Col. STANLEY,

One of his MAJESTY'S
Privy-Council of the
Kingdom of Ireland.

SIR,



VARIOUS are the Views
which Authors have in Ad-
dresses of this Nature; and
considering the Disposition of
the present Age, and the Scar-
city of Worth to countenance those extra-
vagant Encomiums in fashion among
Dedicators, many must be extremely at

a loss for even the shadow of an Excuse for making them. — How will therefore the less Fortunate envy my happy Choice of a Patron, where I have nothing to fear, nothing to regret, but my own Inability of praising as I ought.

To be spoke well of by all, is to be a Prodigy, which I know not if History affords us one Example of; the over-spread-ing Wings of foul Detraction reach from the Cottage to the Throne, and shed a Venom almost universal; but You, Sir! are an Exception to this general Rule: and tho' there are but few, too few, who imitate your Virtues, there are yet fewer who wish they were less. — The Reason of this is obvious, and needs not an Explanation; You have Perfections too necessary to the Interest of the World, not to render the Person possess'd of them admir'd and lov'd — That uncommon Beneficence of Nature, that soft Commiseration which induces you to make the Woes of all Mankind your own, (with this difference alone, that you are more zealous for the Redress of others Grievances, than you wou'd be if inflicted on yourself) takes away all possibility of becoming your Enemy, without being as much so to one's own

own Interest, as one should to Justice. If to be a loyal Subject, a firm and worthy Patriot, a Father to the Orphan, a Dryer of the Widow's Tears, a Friend without Design, and a Reliever in general of all those Oppressions which reach your Ear; if, I say, to merit such a Character, be to be dear and valuable to the World, it is not to be wonder'd at, that you should never be mention'd but with Veneration, nor thought of but with the highest Regard.

But in the midst of that Pleasure, which the Contemplation of all, who are so happy as to know you must afford, there arises also a melancholy Reflection, that when we shall have the Misfortune of losing you, there springs no second Phoenix from your Ashes. How vast a Mitigation of our Sorrows wou'd it be, did you leave us a Son, the Inheritor of his Father's Virtues: I dare not mention those Graces which might be expected to have been his Portion from the other Side, else, for the glory of my Sex, should gladly touch, as far as my weak Pen would give me leave, on some of those many excellent Qualities, which render'd her the Pride and Ornament of it; but she now shines in a sublimer

*limer Sphere, the Companion of Angels,
the Delight of those above, as she was the
most eminent Pattern of Perfection here.
And to remind you of so irreparable a
Loss, wou'd be far from answering that
End which the Trifle, I take the liberty
of presenting you with, was design'd for.
I shall therefore add no more, than that I
am, with the greatest Respect,*

S I R,

Your most Oblig'd,

Most Faithful, and

Most Obedient,

Humble Servant,

ELIZA HAYWOOD.



THE
MASQUERADERS,
OR,
FATAL CURIOSITY.

REAT BRITAIN has no Assembly which affords such variety of Characters as the MASQUERADE; there are scarce any Degrees of People, of what Religion or Principle soever, that some time or other are not willing to embrace an opportunity of partaking this Diversion. But among the number of those who pretty often frequented it, was a Gentleman, whose real Name, for some reasons, I shall conceal under that of DORIMENUS: He is young, handsome, gay, gallant, has an affluence of Fortune and of Wit, is a passionate Lover of Intrigue, and 'tis not to be doubted but that with all these Accomplishments, he found a great many among the Fair Sex to encourage that Disposition: He seldom went there without his Appointment; and it often hapned that three or four Ladies would give him a description of their Habits,

6 *The MASQUERADERS: Or,*

bits, each in hope to be the Favourite She, which should that Night be singled out, and triumph o'er the rest in his distinguish'd Address. This Ambition was sometime the occasion of a good deal of confusion in his Answers, the jealous Watchfulness of one would frequently deprive him of his Pleasures with another. He was never without Embarrassments of that nature: It took up great part of his time, in reading and answering the Reproaches and Complaints he daily received from those who thought themselves slighted; and if his Thoughts and Pen had not been equally swift, he would soon have had no leisure for new Attacks.

By a very great chance, one evening he went, entirely disengaged, to this Scene of Gallantry; but *Fortune*, who seem'd glad of this Opportunity to get the start of *Love*, threw an Adventure in his way, which at his coming there he little thought of. A fine Shepherdess, whose Bon Mien had attracted the Eyes and Addresses of a great number of the Assembly, either thro' being too faint-hearted, or the extreme Heat of the place, for there was a great deal of Company that Night, was so overcome, that she fell down in a fainting Fit in the midst of a Crowd of Gentlemen, who had gathered round her: *DOMINUS* was among them, and was one of the first that endeavour'd to bring her to herself. He was too well acquainted with the Sex, to be a Stranger to Vapours, Spleen, and those other fashionable Distempers, which are often of great service to make a Woman be taken notice of, when nothing in her beside is found worthy of observation, and was provided with a Bottle of Spirits in his Pocket: Her Mask must now be taken off to give her Air, and tho' by this time the Accident had drawn Nuns, Gypsies, Queens, and a confus'd Medley of all Conditions and Professions to her assistance, it was to his Efforts she was indebted for so speedily recovering. It was he who had

who had the honour of holding her in his Arms, during that little deprivation of Sense! It was he who had the pleasure of perceiving her returns of Life, and catching the first Sigh which issued from the struggling Soul! — 'Tis difficult to determine, whether, at the first plucking off her Mask, the sight of her Face gave greater Motives of uneasiness to the Men or the Women which were about her; those only who have experienc'd what it is to love or envy, can be judges what kind of pains the one felt in a hopeless Desire, or the other in seeing themselves so far out-rivall'd. Nature never form'd Features more compleatly lovely than those of this Fair indispos'd — all the Graces seem'd assembled in her Countenance — a thousand dimpled Charms play'd round her lovely Mouth — a thousand little Loves laugh'd in her shining Eyes — the Delicacy of her Complexion exceeded all comparison — her Neck, her Breasts, her fine-proportion'd Hands and Arms — there was no part of her expos'd to view, that did not discover a Beauty peculiar to itself. — The little Confusion, and those modest Blushes which attended it, added somewhat to the Lustre of her native Charms: she thank'd all those who had been aiding to her Recovery, with a Voice so full of harmony, and a Look so sweetly innocent, that it had a wonderful effect on all: but DORIMENUS, whose Heart was easily set on fire by the sight of the least kindling Beauty, cou'd not behold Perfection, such as hers, without feeling an excess of that Passion it was created to inspire; — former Successes gave him a greater boldness than is ordinarily the consequence of Love. — He was too well acquainted with his own Power of pleasing, to suffer thro' a fear to offend; and while the others bow'd and retired at a becoming distance, that she might have leave to recover those Disorders, which her late Swoon, and the Shame for being so surpriz'd,

8 *The MASQUERADERS: Or,*

had thrown her in, he caught her in his Arms, excusing himself for doing so, by telling her he fear'd she was not yet perfectly well, and that he could consent to leave her without support, 'till he was assur'd she was entirely past danger of a Relapse. The Poet says,

*In Love there is a Time,
When dull Obedience is the greatest Crime.*

Tho' this Lady entreated and struggled to get loose, he easily read in her Eyes, those infallible Betrayers of the Heart, that he did not disoblige her in refusing her request: He entertain'd her with so much Wit and Gallantry, and the appearance of so violent a Passion, that she, who was by nature pretty amorous, and easy to receive an Impression, cou'd not fail a susceptibility of Charms, which there are very few in the World to equalize. She had often heard of DORIMENUS, had seen him at a distance, and 'tis probable wish'd to be address'd by him in the manner she now was: She had not Artifice enough to disguise the Pleasure she took in his Conversation, from a Penetration so nice, and so experienced as his. He made his advantage of those Glances which she could not restrain, and desirous of being inform'd of what Character and Circumstances she was, made use of all his Eloquence to persuade her to permit him to accompany her home. Had she any real Scruples to oppose what he requested, he had Wit enough to find Arguments against them; but as she had none but such as were inspir'd only by a fear of appearing too free, and consequently but faintly urged, was not long before she suffer'd herself to be prevail'd on, to grant what perhaps she wish'd with no less Ardency than him who ask'd it. Two Chairs were immediately call'd, and he had the Satisfaction of *publickly* triumphing o'er a Number who wish'd to be in his place, as in his own Thoughts

FATAL CURIOSITY. 9

Thoughts he doubted not of doing so in *private* over all those Scruples. Virtue, Fear, or Honour, might raise in her Breast to the prejudice of his Desire.

BEING come to her House, (which was a very handsome and well-furnish'd one) the Obligations she lay under for the care he had taken of her, serv'd as an excuse for the extraordinary Reception she gave him. — There was nothing the Season afforded of rich and rare, but she order'd for his Entertainment; and he easily had the Address to draw from her in Conversation so much of her Affairs, as to know she was a Widow, and liv'd wholly independent on the Favour of any Relation whatever. — This Information not a little pleas'd him, there was no danger of any Father or Husband to interpose between him and his Designs; — all he had to apprehend, was, that as they both were single, she might expect that were he really possess'd of that Passion he would have her believe, he would make Overtures of a different nature to those he ever had done to any, and which, as lovely as he thought her, were no way agreeable to his Humour. — As he was perfectly acquainted with the World, and in particular with the Foibles, Passions, and Inadvertencies of the Fair Sex; he thought the surest Method of succeeding in such a Case, was not to give her time for Reflection. He therefore press'd her with all those soft undoing Insinuations, those melting Tender-nesses, those seducing Arts which Desire never fails to instruct. — Few Men, how dull and stupid soever they appear in other things, but have Artifice enough this way: — But DORIMENUS, as he had a share of Wit infinitely superior to most of his Sex, so he had also a Face and a Person which render'd the Blandishments he made use of more graceful and persuasive: All Eyes become not Love, some instead of the impressive Languish-

IO *The MASQUERADERS: Or,*

ment they would assume, degenerate into a heavy Dullness, rather forbidding, than exciting the Passion they would raise; but his, whatever Air they wore, were always charming! — whether the gay Delights of Hope revell'd in their Glances, or trembling Doubt aw'd their contracted Fires in down-cast Languishment! — whether they seem'd to triumph or beseech, they were inchanting still! — in every kind of Look transporting!

VAST was their Power, and numberless the Conquests they had gain'd! — DALINDA (for so shall I call the present Victim of their force) had not Arguments sufficient to confute the Strenuousness of those he urg'd, and even Reason seem'd to take the part of Love. — In fine, that very Night he compleated his Conquest, and got possession of all those Joys the glorious Prize could give. — The God of tender Inspirations with pleasure beheld the Sacrifice was made him, and blest the amorous Pair with doubled Vigour, and uncommon Rapture. — The happy DORIMENUS confess'd a Transport beyond what he e'er felt before, and the unrepenting Fair avow'd her lovely Conqueror's unequal'd extent of charming.

BOTH were so highly satisfy'd with each other, that I know no way to make the Reader so truly sensible of it, as to repeat a few Lines which DORIMENUS, who at some times was very poetically inclin'd, writ on the Transactions of this Night, and happen'd a few days after to shew to some of his Friends, which to the best of my Remembrance run thus:

*An amorous Pair with mutual Warmth inspir'd,
Alike desiring, and alike desir'd,
Clasp'd in each other's Arms, resolv'd to know
Th' extremest Bliss which Nature can bestow:
Love made the Banquet, each a hungry Guest,
With greediness devour'd the luscious Feast!*

While

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*While their full Eyes with Extasy ran o'er,
Enjoying all, yet craving still for more!
Joys too sublime for Language to express,
And which even Thought itself must render less.*

'Tis certain that for a time they had for each other, Charms which they imagin'd were not to be found elsewhere, she really doated on him with a Transcendency of Passion, and he, tho' ever accounted the most roving and inconstant of his Sex, prefer'd the Conquest of her Heart to all the others he had made, not only because it was the last, but also that when he consulted his Judgment, he knew of none that had the thousandth part of her Merit. — For some Months he devoted himself entirely to her, and in all probability she might much longer have continu'd the reigning Mistress of his Soul, had she not herself been accessary to her own Misfortune, by a Mismanagement, which those who love, as she did, to Madness, can hardly avoid falling into. — There is nothing in the world more difficult, than to forbear talking of that on which our Thoughts are continually employ'd; and as the Idea of her belov'd DORMENUS was never from her Mind, no Conversation was pleasing in which he had not a part. — Whatever Company she happen'd to be in, she always found some pretence to make him the Theme of her Discourse, and even among those who were the greatest Strangers to him, would invent some way to introduce his Name. — But all this fell short of the Satisfaction she wanted: — Her Soul, full of his Charms, wild 'twixt Desire and Transport, could not contain the vast Excess. — She long'd to impart the mighty Bliss; she panted to pour out the overwhelming Transport.

PHILETA, a young Lady, on whose Wit, Generosity, and Good-nature she had an entire dependence, was the Person she made choice of, to be

12 *The MASQUERADERS: Or,*

intrusted with the dear burthen of this Secret; and while she related to her the Particulars of her Happiness, felt in the delicious Representation, a Pleasure, perhaps, not much inferiour to that which the Reality afforded. — Having brought herself to make this Confidence, she no sooner parted from his Embraces, than she flew to her fair Friend, gave her the whole History of what had pass'd between them—repeated every tender Word he spoke—not the least fond Endearment was forgot—describ'd his Looks—his melting Pressures—his Ardours! — his Impatiences! — his Extasies! — his Languishments! — endeavour'd to make her sensible how different he was from other Lovers! — how much beyond his Sex! — with what a God-like Sublimity of Passion he ador'd her! — and what was more prodigious than the rest, assur'd her, that each Enjoyment but encreased Desire.

PHILECTA, who had herself suffer'd much by Love, and the Ingratitude of a Man who had deceiv'd her with Professions of much the same nature with those her Friend seem'd now so certain were sincere, listen'd to her at first only with Compassion, not doubting but that in a very little time she should hear from her as many Expressions of Complaint as now she did of Rapture. — But Pity wearing off, by being at length brought to believe 'twas needless, a different Passion rose in its stead; she began to envy the Happiness of her Friend — since her own Deception, she had not believ'd there was such a thing as Constancy in Man, would never encourage any Addresses that were offer'd her — had retir'd herself from Company; and having with a vast deal of Pain, at last set free her Mind from a Passion which had been so destructive to her Peace, despis'd the Effects she saw of it in others. — But now to hear daily those luscious Descriptions of continu'd Ardors — to read his Letters, and to find that
still

still the last was more endearing than the former; gave her, as she imagin'd, sufficient Reason to complain of the Severity of her own Fate, which permitted her not to have known those Joys which arise from the Proof of reciprocal Affection.

SHE had never seen DORIMENUS, but was perfectly well acquainted with his Character; and was therefore the more surpriz'd that a Man whom all the World talk'd of as the handsomest, wittiest, and most inconstant of the Sex, should now confine himself to one who, in her Opinion, was far from meriting it from him — DALINDA indeed (would she cry to herself) has Beauty, but there are other Women as agreeable in their Persons, and infinitely more so in their Conversation, that have not met with so grateful a Return. — I cannot think what he sees in her — she has nothing but a Face to recommend her — she has no Wit — every thing she says is trifling — all her Notions are poor and insignificant — and I am certain has not Delicacy enough of Soul to be capable of any degree of that Passion she seems so fond of professing. — She may like, but 'tis impossible he should love.

IT was not that PHILECTA was naturally addicted to Detraction, or that she had too good an opinion of her own Merits to think favourably of those of another; for, excepting the Beauty of her Person, she was in reality every way superiour to DALINDA; and inferring from that Judgment that DORIMENUS look'd no farther than the exterior Part, could not believe him a Man of that Nicety she had heard him fam'd for. — When she reflected on his manner of writing, she was convinc'd he had an uncommon share of Wit: but then, when she consider'd how little the other was capable of answering his Letters, she knew not how he could reconcile to his good Sense the sending them.

14 *The MASQUERADERS: Or,*

THE Arguments she made use of for and against him in her Mind, raised at length a prodigious desire to entertain him: she fancy'd that if she had an opportunity of talking to him half an hour, she should be able to form a more exact Judgment of his Sentiments, and Humour, than all she could gather from Description. She told DALINDA she had a Curiosity of seeing her Lover, and desir'd she might be admitted to come, as by Accident, to visit her some day when he was with her; but as indifferent an opinion as she had of this Lady's Understanding, she found it not so easy to prevail on her to grant this Request, as she had imagin'd: In spite of that Knowledge most Women have of their own Perfections, she doubted their Force in the presence of one who had so many, tho' of a different sort from those she was mistress of.

IF PHILECTA had a less delicate Complexion or Features, not altogether cast in so fine Mould, there was something so irresistibly engaging in her Eyes, as well supplied all other wants; besides she had a Shape the most exquisite that could be, and was the genteelest Woman in the World. — Then for her Conversation, it was such, that there was scarce a Possibility of quitting it without a wish to re-enjoy. — All these Charms consider'd, the other must have been more weak than she was thought to be, if she had introduced the Person possessed of them to the Man she lov'd, and who she was sensible had so true a taste of Wit: she would not, however, absolutely refuse her, but evaded what she ask'd in as artful and obliging a manner as she could. But PHILECTA easily perceiv'd it was not by her means she should ever have her Curiosity satisfy'd, and therefore forbore repeating her Request, unless sometimes to gratify her Spleen, by putting the other to the pain of inventing Excuses, which she knew she was not very ready at.

The Inclination she had before of seeing and speaking to him, now growing stronger by being oppos'd, she resolv'd to accomplish it some way or other; and DALINDA, according to custom, still continuing to inform her of all that pass'd between them, one day told her he had made her a Present of a Ticket for the MASQUERADE: A Stratagem came presently in her head, which seem'd to assure her of Success. — She enquir'd, in a careless manner, and, and so as cou'd not be taken to have any design in it, what Hour she was to go, what Habits both were to wear, and whether they went together from her House, and were to meet at the MASQUERADE, or any other Place; and being fully inform'd of every thing she wanted to know, told her she had an Acquaintance who was the most artful Creature in the World in dressing Ladies for that Diversion; and that if she pleas'd, she would send her.

THE other joyfully accepted of the Offer, being willing to appear as amiable as she could in all Dresses in the Eyes of DORIMENUS. The appointed Day and Hour arriv'd, and PHILECTA fail'd not of sending a Person to assist her in equipping her, as she had promis'd. — This was a Creature of her own, whom she recommended, and under the pretence of serving, was to delay the time. — In the mean while, she dress'd herself in a Habit, in every thing exactly the same with that which DALINDA had told her she was to wear; and being inform'd by her of the direct Hour she had appointed to meet him in, took care to be there early enough. — She soon distinguish'd the charming *Spaniard*, (for it was in that Disguise that her unthinking Friend told her he was to be) and he as soon found his DALINDA (as he thought) in a neat *Indian Slave*. — He ran to her, and caught her in his Arms, (the freedom of that Place allowing that familiarity) which she receiv'd in

16 *The MASQUERADERS: Or,*

a manner becoming the Person he took her for, resolving still to act the Part she had begun, till Necessity should oblige her to confess the Counterfeit.

HIS Behaviour and the tender and obliging things he said, made her know DALINDA had not boasted of the Power she had over him, without some reason; and that if he did not in reality love her, he so well feign'd the Passion, that a Woman of more Discernment than she was mistress of, might have been deceiv'd by it. But she had not an opportunity of discovering so much of his manner of Conversation as she expected. He took a sudden fancy in his head of going home, and all she could say to prevail on him to the contrary, was ineffectual: he told her he found himself a little disorder'd on the sudden, that he was certain the Noise, Heat, and Confusion of the place they were in, would be far from affording him any Relief, and that he would go with her to her House, and pass the Remainder of the Evening there.—

He so little expected a Refusal from her, that he order'd Chairs, and had almost forc'd her into one before she recover'd Presence enough of Mind, to think what she had best do——and in the hurry of the Apprehension of being carry'd to DALINDA's, and all her Contrivance betray'd, pluck'd off her Mask, and let him see his Mistake.

BOTH stood confounded for some Moments.— He, thro' surprize for what reason she had no sooner convinc'd him of it, and she, thro' the Confusion of her Thoughts, what Excuse to make for having done so.—— She, however, was the first who overcame it, and assuming as gay an Air as possible; ——— You see, Sir, *said she*, how impossible it is for you to do any thing in private; not all your Caution to preserve the Honour of DALINDA, cou'd prevent a Woman, who suspected your Amour, from detecting you too plainly for a

Denial,

FATAL CURIOSITY 17

Denial. If 'twere possible, Madam, *answer'd he*, for your Curiosity to be as diligent, as your Eyes and Wit are penetrating, I should not wonder if you made discoveries of Secrets infinitely more conceal'd than this : ——— But, *continu'd he*, (taking her Hand, and kissing it in spite of her Efforts to hinder him) since whether by Design or Chance, you are in possession of my Secret, in justice to myself, I can do no other than endeavour to be Master of *Yours*; at least, so far as to know the name of my Confidant, and where I may wait on her to conjure her to preserve it. ——— Trust to my Generosity for that, *resum'd she*, *struggling to get from him*. On any other Score, I will, *retorted he*, *holding her more fast*; but not in this, by Heaven: nor will I give you so just a cause for Ridicule, as the parting from you thus unsatisfy'd would be. ——— Nothing can be more impossible than that she wou'd have been able to have escap'd, without letting him into the whole Affair, if DALINDA had not that moment approach'd the Place. ——— After all the Delays and artful Impediment with which PHILECTA's Emissary had kept her from interrupting them, she was at last got there, where the first Person she saw, was her dear *Don*, employ'd in this manner. ——— As much taken up as PHILECTA was, she presently perceiv'd her, and forcing one of her Hands from him, was lucky enough to get on her Mask before the other came near enough to discover who she was. ——— Look round, *cry'd she*, and take care you have not a Witness of what you are doing, whose Upbraidings will be more destructive to your Peace, than any Discoveries I shall be able to make. ——— She had scarce finished these Words, when DALINDA coming up to him, and giving him a little blow on the shoulder with her Fan, *cry'd*, 'Tis well, Sir; I find you are of too active a Disposition to let a moment pass without its business. The manner in which

18 *The MASQUERADERS: Or,*

which this was spoke, left him no room to doubt that this last was really *DALINDA*, and in the sudden surprize of being caught at such a Juncture, let go the Hand he had kept Prisoner, and *PHILECTA* slipt thro' the Crowd, and got into a Chair without discovery: — He did not attempt to stay her; for tho' he would almost have given a Limb to have known who she was, he had more Good-nature and Complaisance for the other, than to make any offer of pursuing her. — It is not to be doubted, but that *DALINDA* ask'd all those Questions which this Adventure render'd excusable; but he was as much to seek for the Meaning of it as she, and only telling her the truth of the Mistake he had been betray'd into by the likeness of their Dress, eas'd her of great part of those jealous Fears she was at first sight of them possess'd with; and pursuing the Inclination he had of going home with her, they past that Night as they had done many former ones.

WHEN *PHILECTA* was come home, and had the liberty of contemplating on this Affair, she was far from being so well contented with what she had done, as she imagin'd she shou'd have been. — Her Curiosity, or at least she yet knew so little of herself, as to imagine, it was that alone which prompted her to take these Measures, was yet unsatisfy'd — she had seen *DORIMENUS*, and had talk'd to him, and was convinc'd that he was a Man of fine Figure and fine Sense; she cou'd not help acknowledging also that the Tenderness with which he accosted her while he took her for *DALINDA*, in part excused the Passion that Lady had for him — but still she wanted to know something more, which if she had a second Opportunity of talking to him, she fancy'd she shou'd be able to find out. — She curs'd the Interruption which had broke off their Conversation, tho' it was the only means which cou'd have prevented his dis-

covering

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covering who she was. — In fine, she was in Love — was charm'd with him to an infinite degree, without being sensible she was so; — and while she languish'd for a second Interview, believ'd the Uneasiness she felt, no more than the effect of a Curiosity ungratify'd. — Small was the Repose she took that Night, and to add to the Perturbations of her Mind, DALINDA in the Morning came to visit her; told her, she but that Moment was risen from the Arms of her Charmer, and as she used to do, related to her all the Passages of his Behaviour: among the rest, she told her, laughing, of the pleasant Mistake he had made in Addressing another Lady for her, and that he cou'd not be persuaded it was any other, till she appear'd in reality, and undeceiv'd him. What, cry'd PHILECTA, *interrupting her*, then he did not see her Face? No, *answered the other*, most certainly he did not, for if he had, he wou'd sooner have been convinc'd of his Error, and neither have given himself the Trouble, nor been so unmannerly to a Stranger, as to have engag'd her in the manner I surpriz'd him. — You may possibly be deceived, Madam! *resum'd PHILECTA, a little peevishly*, all the World allows him to be a Man of Gallantry, — and if he had seen the Lady's Face, perhaps there might be nothing there disagreeable enough to make him think it not worth his while to endeavour to engage her. — Lord! my Dear, *reply'd the other*, you are strangely cruel to put such things into one's head, — but I don't much regard what you say, — you are a Foe profess'd to the Sex, and will not believe there is one among them worthy of a Woman's Affection. — Not for his Constancy indeed, *said PHILECTA*, and tho' I do not know DORIMENUS, I believe he has as little of that Virtue as the rest of his Specie. You wou'd be of another Opinion, *answer'd she*, if you had seen his Behaviour last Night, — I never saw him

10

20 *The MASQUERADERS: Or,*

so Thoughtful, so Chagrin, so Dull; all I cou'd say or do, had not the power to divert him, and this for no other Reason, than because I seem'd to suspect the Truth of what he told me concerning the Mistake. — It wou'd be impossible to describe the Pleasure these words created in PHILECTA's Soul, she presently imagin'd his Melancholy proceeded from another Cause than that which he pretended, doubted not but he fretted at the hindrance she had been to his commencing an Acquaintance with a Woman who had not seem'd unworthy of it, and grew more easy as she thought he grew the contrary. — They had a great deal more Chat to the same purpose, and many things that DALINDA said, PHILECTA took to her advantage, others the reverse. She was altogether unable to form any direct Judgment of his Sentiments, and Curiosity having now a new and more vigorous Incentive than before, she resolv'd to be satisfy'd, and try him to the utmost, whatever shou'd be the Consequence. — In this destructive, and to herself unquiet Disposition, did she pass some days, not knowing what Course to take to compass her Wishes, till the unwary DALINDA hapning to tell her she expected him at such a time, put a Stratagem into her head, which till then she had never thought of: — She took Pen and Paper, and counterfeiting as near as she cou'd the Character of the happy DALINDA, writ to him in this manner.



To



TO DORIMENUS.

A Relation being come out of the Country with a design to pass some days with me, makes it wholly improper for me to see you at home, but shall be glad to meet you at the appointed Hour, at the House of Mr. in St. Street; I have a particular Friend lodges there. Enquire for PHILECTA, and you will find

Your most Passionate

and Faithful

DALINDA.

SHE had play'd the Counterfeit so well, that 'twas scarce possible for the most discerning Eye to have discovered the difference of the Hand — DORIMENUS was entirely deceiv'd by it, and immediately sent an Answer by the Bearer, that he wou'd not fail to be there at the time.

HAD PHILECTA ask'd herself the Question, when the Hour of his Approach drew near, her beating Heart had soon inform'd her it was to something more than Curiosity she ow'd her present Agitations, but not all her good Sense, not all her former Experience of the Passion she was now again possess'd of, had yet once reminded her, that she took all this pains for any thing more, than to triumph over the Tenaciousness of DALINDA, and to have the pleasure of rallying her a little for her imaginary Security — or at the most, that it proceeded from a bare liking of his Conversation

22 *The MASQUERADERS: Or,*

sation, and a humour of amusing herself at a time, when she had nothing else to do. — But as much unacquainted as she was with the true state of her own Wishes, she left nothing undone that she thought wou'd be to the advantage of her appearing well in the Eyes of DORIMENUS, — her Chambermaid and her Glass were all the Company she admitted that day, — a thousand and a thousand times were the Patches plac'd, alter'd, and replac'd, — the Position of the Curls as often chang'd, — now *this*, anon *that* Fashion she thought most becoming, — sometimes one sort of Glance, then its contrary seem'd the likeliest to attract — and she remain'd unfix'd in Determination, how she shou'd Look, or Speak, or Act, when she was told he was enquiring for her. — 'Tis probable indeed, that at sight of him, she forgot all the little Arts she had been practising, and receiv'd him with an Air purely natural; but whatever it was, it had something in it, which, as he afterwards confess'd, was infinitely more engaging than any thing he had ever seen. — To find in the Friend and Confidant of DALINDA, the Woman whom he had attack'd in so particular a manner at the MASQUERADE, and whom since he had seen he never ceas'd to wish for, as an Acquaintance of a different nature than what he now had reason to hope, gave him a mixture of Surprize, Joy, and Concern: He rejoiced at an Opportunity of being in her Company, but was heartily vexed at the occasion, which he expected wou'd not only bring on a speedy Interruption, but also take from him the means of ever being able to address her in the manner he desir'd; — the Confusion of his Thoughts did not however deprive him of the power of making her a great many well order'd Compliments on this unlook'd-for Happiness, which she return'd in such a fashion as confirm'd him in the opinion he had before conceiv'd

FATAL CURIOSITY. 23

conceiv'd of her Wit, and Good-Breeding. ———
 After a pretty deal of Conversation on ordinary Subjects, PHILECTA looking on her Watch, seem'd to express some wonder that DALINDA tarry'd so long: The time, *said she*, in which she appointed to be here, is more than an hour since elaps'd; but I suppose, she is perfectly satisfied of the Strength of her Interest in the Person who waits for her, or she wou'd not run so great a Risque of disobliging him, by leaving him to Conversation, no way capable of entertaining him. Whether this Lady had any other design in speaking these words, than to prevent him from any suspicion of the Plot she had laid to bring him there, is uncertain; but they seem'd so fit a handle for him to begin a Discourse, he knew not till then to bring about, that he cou'd not let it slip, without having been as stupid, as he was really the reverse. I know not Madam! *answer'd he*, (bowing in the most respectful manner) what Excuse she will be able to make to you indeed, for imposing on your Good-Nature this task of Civility to a Man, whom your Judgment must inform you is for many reasons, strangely unworthy of it. ——— For my part, the Blessing I am possess'd of by her means, wou'd be too great, did not the Cause, by which it is procur'd, allay it: ——— Yes, Charming PHILECTA, *continu'd he*, (after a little pause, and looking on her with the most tender and beseeching Air) I confess myself in this both Ambitious and Ungrateful, ——— tho' to be admitted to gaze on your adorable Eyes! ——— to listen to the Wonders of your Wit! ——— and to have so near a view of all your Heaven of Beauties, fills my whole Soul with Joy unutterable; yet I am not content, ——— O! were I allow'd this privilege by your kindness, ——— had I but merits to deserve that favour, or did your good opinion enhance the value of what I am master of, how truly blest were my
 Condi-

24 *The MASQUERADERS: Or,*

Condition! — how cou'd I ever, rapt in immortal Extasies, dwell on this Hand, — devour it with my eager Kisses, and — Here PHILECTA, who from the moment she perceiv'd the aim of his Discourse had been kept from interrupting him only by the Confusion of her Thoughts, now recover'd presence of mind enough to prevent his doing as he said; and snatching away her Hand; Whatever good opinion I had entertain'd of you (*cry'd she*) such a Behaviour is the way to forfeit it; nor wou'd you treat me in this fashion, had you not the most indifferent one of me. — But, *added she*, (abating somewhat of that severity which she had assum'd when she began to speak) the Weakness which is too ordinarily discover'd in my Sex, in part excuses your proceeding. — I am sensible there are not a few of us who cannot be alone with one of yours, without expecting an Address of the nature you wou'd make to me. — Nay, — nay, *rejoined she*, (perceiving he was about to offer something in objection to what she said) I have mention'd the only undeniable reason of your Application, — there cannot be another found, — for I am certain the enamour'd DORIMENUS is too well vers'd in what will please DALINDA, to stand in need of practising his Lesson on any other Woman; or if he did, it wou'd not be her Friend PHILECTA he wou'd make his Property. — As much Courage as he usually had in these Attacks, as successful as he had ever been, he was almost at a loss how to proceed with a Lady who he found so well furnish'd with Weapons of Defence; and if he had not been inform'd by some tell-tale *Cupids* in her Eyes, which now and then flew out with tender Messages, that he had a Friend within, might probably have given over both the Hope and the Attempt of vanquishing.

BUT thus embolden'd, he prosecuted his Design with all the Artifice of tempting Passion — knelt, sigh'd,

figh'd, begg'd, and swore—— said all that the most burning, raging Love could suggest, or Wit and Eloquence find Words for— No Interruption happening (for she had order'd to be deny'd whoever came) Hour after Hour pass'd on in this Employment, and not a Moment flew without some new Invention to urge his Passion, and to heighten hers. She was, notwithstanding what she endur'd in the constraint, so much on her Guard, as not to let fall even a Word that might give him hope.

SHE would not trust her own Power of reasoning so far as to enter into any Argument with him, but on the score of DALINDA; and whenever he conjur'd her to pity what he felt, she reminded him what 'twas he ow'd to her who had given him the highest Proofs of Compassion. — He could say nothing to her, but what she answer'd with the name of DALINDA. — As the Affair was, he had indeed a nice Game to play, and it requir'd all the fine Sense and artful Sophistry he was master of, to sollicite Favours from the *one*, without appearing guilty of an Ingratitude for those he had receiv'd from the *other*, which might justly render his Suit of no effect; tho' it is very much to be wonder'd at, that that Passion which had prompted her to take so much pains to engage him, and which while he was pressing her, swell'd in her struggling Heart, and almost crack'd the Strings that held it, did not in spite of her burst out, disclose the God, and show its force above the faint Controul of Reason.

BUT DORIMENUS was not always to triumph at first sight; he could not find a DALINDA in PHILECTA: as she knew better how to love, she also knew better how to govern it; and the Time being arrived, in which, to be consistent with good Manners and Decency, he must be obliged to take leave, all he could obtain from her at parting was, her Permission to wait on her again the next day; and

26 *The MASQUERADERS: Or,*

and that only, as she pretended, that she might inform him of *DALINDA*, who she told him she would see in the Morning, and know the Cause which had detain'd her from coming to the Appointment.

It must be only a Soul possess'd of the strictest *Virtue* and most violent *Desire*, that can form any just Idea of what the poor *PHILECTA* suffer'd in so exemplary a Self-denial. — Never Woman lov'd with a greater Transcendency of Passion. — Never Woman was press'd to obey the Dictates of her own Inclinations with more Subtilty and Vigour; — yet never Woman resist'd with a superior Fortitude. — The Pangs she endur'd, were made more sharp by a Reflection that she owed them to herself; and when she consider'd how easy, how tranquil her Thoughts were before she saw *DORIMENUS*, it was with the severest Censure she exclaim'd against that Curiosity which had so far betray'd her. — She was now no longer insensible by what Passion she had been sway'd to with a second Interview. — She found she lov'd him with an extravagance of Dotage, — lov'd him to a degree beyond what she had felt before, even tho' the breaking it off had very near cost her her Life, and trembled to think what the Consequences might be of this second, and more violent Inclination. — She was not sure she should always be able to refuse the melting Pressures of this dangerous Charmer. — She fear'd the Effects of a Desire so wild and ungovernable — and justly doubted the Force of Reason.

What could she do, — what could she resolve, thus tortur'd, thus torn betwixt the fiercest Opposites — yet not even in a Thought transgressing Honour. She at last determin'd never to see him more — No, *said she to herself*, all charming as he is, tho' my Eyes can know no Joy but looking on him, nor my Ears but in Attention

FATAL CURIOSITY. 27

to his harmonious Tongue ; tho' every Sense is full of his Perfections, and have no taste for any other Pleasure, they shall no more be trusted with the fatal Transport. — Virtue, Honour, Religion, Reputation are at stake, and all cry out, *No more indulge the ruinous Desire ! — Fly the destructive Graces of the lovely, the too engaging DORIMENUS ——— rather let me die than give a loose to a Passion so pernicious to every thing that ought to be dear or valuable.*

WITH this Resolution she gave a strict Charge to her Servants to say she was not at home — but she had no sooner spoke the Words, than a Flood of tender Passion rising in her Soul, she was about to countermand this Order. — She was not half a Minute together in the same mind — hard she thought it to deny herself so innocent a Satisfaction as the sight of him ; but harder yet she found it would be, in his Presence, to contain the Passion she was possess'd of, from breaking out to his Discovery.

REASON therefore enabling her to consider that the only way to conquer was to fly ; and fearing that if she should but hear his Voice, the dearlov'd Sound might have force enough in it to shake the Resolution she had form'd, and that she should be weak enough to call him up, laid hold of the first Moment of cool Consideration to put it out of her Power to follow the expected Returns of her softer Emotions — She flew out of the House, and came not home till late at Night ; — and tho' there pass'd not one Hour in all that Day, in which she was not a thousand times about to come back — yet she had still Command enough of herself, to suppress the struggling Inclination.

IN the mean time the agreeable Cause of her Disquiet was far from being in perfect ease himself — he was prodigiously charm'd with her ; and if the Perturbations of his Mind were less terrible
than

28 *The MASQUERADERS: Or,*

than those she endur'd, they were yet more violent than those which Men ordinarily feel on the like occasion.

HE had continu'd all Night in Agitations, which might very well be accounted the effects of Love; and tho' he had some reason to hope she look'd not on him with Eyes of Hate or Disdain, yet her Friendship with DALINDA, and her Knowledge of the Intimacy between him and that Lady, were powerful Objections against him. — But not being of a Disposition very liable to Despair, and too impatient to endure Suspence, he came prepar'd with all the Arguments his Passion and un-failing Wit could furnish him with, resolv'd to know at once what 'twas he had to expect.

To find she was abroad, after having promis'd to admit his Visit, was a Disappointment he was not arm'd against — and it gave him a greater Shock than it would have done any other Man, because he was less accusom'd to meet such Treatment. — It was the first Mortification of this kind his Vanity had ever receiv'd; and had it been given by another Woman, 'tis probable would have cur'd his Passion. — But PHILECTA had got fast hold of his Heart, and this little Slight was infinitely too weak to set it free — Dispirited and altogether unfit for Conversation, he trifled away two or three Hours at a Coffee-House, then went again; but meeting the same Answer as before, grew almost mad.

HE was now convinced, Love had its Pains as well as Pleasures, and was as much surpriz'd to find this Alteration in himself, as he was that there was a Woman in the World on whom he had not been able to make any visible Impression. — After indulging his Spleen the best part of the Day at his own Lodgings, he went again in the Evening to her's; but she being still abroad, he could not conceal his Discontent. — He walk'd backward
and

FATAL CURIOSITY. 29

and forward in her Dining-room, ask'd a thousand impertinent Questions of the Maid, and beginning to believe it an Impossibility to see her that Night, could not leave the Place without letting her know some part of the Uneasiness he sustain'd. — He desir'd Pen and Paper, which being brought him, he writ to her in this manner.

To the Cruel, but most Adorable PHILECTA.

NOTHING could have convinced me you were not altogether divine, but the little Disposition I find in you to Mercy: In the Eye of Heaven, to be a zealous Votary, is to be a meritorious one; and I am certain the penetrating Eyes of my adored PHILECTA cannot but have discern'd that Quality in me — As never any Woman was created so charming like her, so never any Man had a Heart more susceptible of her Power than mine. — It is with the utmost Resignation — the utmost Pleasure I devote my whole Soul to Love and You, and beg no more than your Acceptation of the Offering — Permit me but to see you, and make your own Conditions, how far I may obey the Dictates of my Passion in declaring myself

The Excellent PHILECTA's

Everlasting Slave,

DORIMENUS.

P.S.

30 *The MASQUERADERS: Or,*

P. S. I will take the liberty of waiting on you to-morrow Evening; and since Business, or, which I much fear, some more agreeable Amusement, depriv'd me this Day of the Blessing you made me hope, entreat you will have Compassion enough for the Anxieties I feel in this Disappointment, not to make me the most miserable of all created Beings, by a second, which would certainly compleat that Ruin which the first has begun.

WHAT became of the Soul-tortur'd PHILECTA, when she came home and read these Lines, let those unhappy Women, who have felt the Force of a Passion as violent as hers, describe — it is not in my Power, any more than it is to represent, as it deserves, the never to be sufficiently admir'd Effect of her Resolution, and firm Adherence to the Rules of Virtue, in an Exigence so dangerous! — Tho' overwhelm'd and lost in Love and soft Desire; tho' at each thought of DORIMENUS, unusual Warmth ran thrilling thro' her Veins, her Blood beat high, and she was all o'er Pulse — tho' her whole Soul dissolv'd in tender Languishments, and for one dear, one blissful Moment she would have forgiven an Age of Life — Yet fix'd in her Determination, she chose to die, rather than yield to accept the proffer'd Joy.

To avoid what most she wish'd, and put it out of her Power ever to recede from the Resolution she had form'd of never seeing him any more, she pitched on a Method very extraordinary, and what, perhaps, no Woman before her ever chose. — She did not doubt but that the same Passion which had inspir'd him to write to her in the manner he had done, would make him neglect no Opportunity of being in her Company. — He had told her in the Postscript of his Letter, that he would come the next Day, and she could not answer for herself that

FATAL CURIOSITY. 31

that she would not see him — but if she should continue to be denied then, or whenever after he should make the same Attempt, yet still there was no Defence against his Writing; and even if she return'd no Answer to encourage him to pursue his Designs, yet it was keeping alive a consuming Fire in her Breast, which she had hope might be extinguish'd, when there was no longer a Possibility of seeing him or hearing from him.

SHE rose early in the Morning, and having made what haste she could in dressing, surpriz'd DALINDA in her Bed. — I come, Madam, said she, with an Air so wild and troubled, as spoke the Dissatisfaction of her Soul, to relate to you a History which will afford you both Pain and Pleasure; and when you shall hear with how much Barbarity you have been treated by those you most confided in, you will also know you have your Revenge in as exquisite a manner as your most vindictive Thoughts could wish.

HERE she stop'd, either unable to utter more, for the violent Emotions which just at that time could not be suitable to the Cause, or that she expected what she would reply to Words which promised something so unexpected. DALINDA, indeed, gave her not much time to pause, and having nothing but DORIMENUS in her Head, immediately fancy'd it must be something relating to him which PHILECTA had to reveal: And starting up in her Bed, cry'd, What do you mean, my Dear! have you heard any thing of DORIMENUS! He is the falsest of all his perjur'd Sex, resum'd the other, hastily; nor am I at all behind him in Treachery and Ingratitude — But not to add to the Cruelty I have already been guilty of to you, by keeping you in Suspence, know that I love him, love him to Distraction, to the extreme height of furious, raging Passion — that

32 *The MASQUERADERS: Or,*

he has declared himself my everlasting Votary — and that there wants but Opportunity for us to be as compleatly wicked as Falshood and the Accomplishment of loose Desire can make us.

IT must be left to the Reader's Imagination to conceive what 'twas DALINDA felt in the sudden Shock of this unlook'd-for Thunder-clap — there are no Words capable of doing Justice to the Horrors, the Perplexities which at that Instant invaded her whole Soul, convuls'd all her Frame, and shook each tender Limb with Tremblings, such as for a time depriv'd her of the Power of Speech. She, whose Discourse had thrown her into this Condition, was herself incapable of regarding it, feeling in her own Breast Anxieties at least equal to those she had occasion'd in her's — and going on with the destructive Story, There, *cry'd she, throwing on the Bed the Letter which DORIMENUS had writ*, there, read that, and you will need but little Information how very guilty we have been.

THE sight of his well-known Hand, recall'd the fainting Spirits of the unfortunate DALINDA — she read the fatal Scroll, and by degrees coming out of that Astonishment, which had for some Moments stunn'd Reflection, and suspended the most raging Passion of the Soul — Despair and Jealousy now shew'd themselves in their most proper Colours, and pour'd out Curses numberless on the perfidious DORIMENUS and PHILECTA, those Undoers of her Peace! — those Betrayers of her Trust! — with the most bitter Invectives — the most severe Reproaches Heart e'er conceiv'd, or Tongue e'er utter'd, did she exclaim against the Baseness of them both. — Her guilty Friend heard her with Patience, nor interposed one Word in Vindication either of herself or him, whose ruinous Charms had been the Cause of all this Scence of Woe; 'till perceiving her Fury had

FATAL CURIOSITY. 33

had almost spent itself in Railing, she desir'd her Attention to what yet remain'd to be told of this tormenting Secret ; which the other willingly complying with, she reveal'd every Circumstance of the Affair, beginning from the Measures which her Curiosity had prompted her to take, to see, and entertain the Man whose Character she had heard so much of, and concluding with the fatal Consequence, and her Resolution henceforward ever to avoid him.

SHE had no sooner ended, than DALINDA, as doubting the Truth of her last Words, with a Sigh, cry'd out, And can you then, PHILECTA, be so much the Mistress of your Inclinations, as to maintain a Resolution so infinitely prejudicial to them. — Reason, *answer'd the other*, may certainly enable one to do a great deal ; but lest it should not be sufficient of itself for my Protection, I call in the Assistance of a jealous Rival's watchful Care. — I will not promise that without your Aid I could for ever deny myself the Joy of looking on him — Nor would I on any other Score have made you the Confidant of my Weakness. But what Method, interrupted DALINDA, is it in my Power to take ? The Heart that is once estrang'd, requires more Artifice than mine to recover. You have no Cause (*reassumed PHILECTA*) to imagine your Case so desperate. — I have already told you by what Stratagems, which my Curiosity taught me, I occasion'd these two Days absence, he yet believes you would not receive a Visit at your own House — write to him, therefore, convince him of the contrary — and when you see him next, there is no danger but your continu'd Kindness, and the appearance of my continu'd Scorn, and the Impossibility he will find to entertain me, will oblige him to give over a hopeless Prosecution, and turn the whole bent of his Desires on her who has so dearly purchased them. —

34 *The MASQUERADERS: Or,*

Besides, *added she*, if Fondness fails to engage, I leave his Letter with you, permit you to shew it him, to upbraid him with it, and if he has any spark of Pride or Resentment in him, (of both which I am much mistaken if he has not a considerable Share) he will soon hate the Woman who has expos'd him in the manner I have done to you — and the Contempt he will have for me, make him avoid my Presence, with as much Care as too much Love and Admiration obliges me to do his. With this Advice, and the Assurance that whatever she suffer'd in so terrible a Constraint, she never would consent to see him more, PHILECTA left her more at ease than she had been at the beginning of her Discourse, nor was she herself without some secret Satisfaction that she had perform'd the cruel Task she had set herself, and been severely just to Virtue — and in the midst of all those Agonies which arise from struggling Nature unconquer'd, tho' o'erpower'd, felt a kind of gloomy Transport, that she had pass'd the fiery Tryal, and secured her Honour from all the Attacks of Love and her own Wishes.

PHILECTA was no sooner gone, than DALLINDA went about to follow the Advice she had given her, and reserving her Approaches, that they might break out with the greater fury when she saw him, employ'd her Pen to DORIMENUS in this manner.



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To the most Charming of his Sex, the
Accomplish'd DORIMENUS.

ALL Obstacles being now remov'd, I beg to see my Angel this Evening about Five at my own House, where beside the grand Business of my Life, Love, I have another Affair to communicate concerning the Occasion of my not meeting the Soul of all my Joys the other Day at PHILECTA's.— Fail not to come, if you would have me think you yet have that Tenderness you so often have made Profession of, to

Your most Passionate and

Ever Faithful

DALINDA.

THIS Billet was far from being receiv'd with that Welcome from DORIMENUS, which those from her were accustomed to meet. — He had again been to visit PHILECTA, and was again disappointed in his hope of seeing her; which, together with having no Answer to the Letter he had left for her the Day before, put him in so ill an Humour, that he was entirely unfit for any Conversation, much more for an amorous one. He liked PHILECTA too well, to like any other Woman at all; and the Opinion he had, that it was for the sake of DALINDA he had found the other so deaf to his Entreaties, render'd her, of all her Sex, the least capable of pleasing him. —

36 *The MASQUERADERS: Or,*

Altogether indifferent, therefore, how she might take it, he return'd an Answer of Excuse, but in so cold and careless a Stile, that if she had been wholly ignorant of his new Passion, she might easily have perceiv'd something had happen'd to the ruin of her Hopes.



To the Agreeable DALINDA.

I Am extreamly sorry that Business of the greatest Consequence makes it impossible for me to see you at the time you mention. — When I have dispatch'd that, I shall gladly attend you, and renew those Tenderesses, which will be ever a Pleasure to him, who is

Sincerely Yours,

DORIMENUS.

P. S. I fear it will be some Days before I can be happy enough to see you.

'Tis utterly impossible to represent with what Affliction she receiv'd so manifest a Proof, that she no longer had a place in the Affection of DORIMENUS; for tho' by what she heard from PHILECTA, and the sight of his Letter to her, she was enough convinc'd of his Insincerity and Mutability of Temper, yet she was far from believing she had entirely lost him; but she now cou'd think no other. — She read the vexatious Billet over and over, and cou'd find in it nothing that had the appearance of Love, — it seem'd scarce Complaissant, and the bitter Anguish of her Soul vent-
ed

FATAL CURIOSITY. 37

ed itself in Complainings, such as had he been Witness of (possess'd as he was with the most violent Passion for another) he must have pity'd, and perhaps, reliev'd the sad Despair which had occasion'd them.

THE Tempest of her Grief a little over, and the Power of Consideration return'd, she began to think what was best for her to do, either to oblige him to a Return of Kindness, or to acknowledge himself as false and as ungrateful as he had sworn to be the contrary. Full of her Wrongs, therefore, and impatient to upbraid him, she took his Letter to PHILECTA, and sent it to him under a Cover, in which she writ these Lines.



To the Thankless, but Ever-Dear, DORIMENUS.

SINCE you have no leisure Moments to throw away on a Woman whom you no longer love, I send you enclosed this Letter, that you may know I am not insensible of the Reason of your Absence. — PHILECTA, I confess, has Charms to create the most violent Passion; but I can never be brought to acknowledge, that all she is possess'd of, were they infinitely superior to what they are, can be an Excuse for Falshood and Ingratitude to another. — I need not tell you with what a Fervency of tender Passion I have lov'd you, my Actions have sufficiently convinc'd you of that Truth; but when I declare, that I do still love you, love you with the same unbated Fondness as before I knew your Crime! I need appeal no farther, than to your own Soul to judge, whether or not I give a Proof of Constancy and forgiving Tenderness,

38 *The MASQUERADERS: Or,*

derness, which the World cannot produce frequent Examples of — By Heaven! you are, even in Falshood, dearer to me than my Life, or than every thing the World calls valuable. — Return then, thou lovely Ingrate! Thou charming Destroyer of my Peace, return! — again make me happy in those transporting Joys, which only you have power to give, and none but those, who love like me, are capable of receiving — Be but half as ready to Accept a Pardon, as I am to Afford it, and I shall still be blest; — nor will I ever repeat what's past, unless to raise our Bliss, by a remembrance and fond regretting of this little Interval. — Haste to my Arms! my eager, my expecting Arms! and let me there unfold what 'tis I wish, what 'tis I languish for: amidst that Rapture, I can alone unfold how much, — how passionately, — how much beyond the reach of Words, I am,

My Adored DORIMENUS's

Most faithfully Devoted

DALINDA.

P. S. I beg, as tho' for my Life, to see you this Night: I know you are enough Master of your own Time to grant me this Request; and if refused, shall be certain, that want of Inclination is my only Enemy — Once more, my Angel, adieu.

Let any of that Sex (of which I believe there are but few who have not plurality of Engagements) form to themselves an Idea of what DORIMENUS felt in so surprizing a Turn, — to see his own Letter, containing the most passionate Declaration of Love to one Woman, in the Hands of another, whom he had also pretended to love, to the same violent Degree; — and at the same time, to find so much forgiving Goodness, where
he

he could have expected only Rage and Resentment, — to be press'd beyond Denial to come and receive that Pardon, which he was conscious of being far from meriting — All this was sufficient to excite in him the utmost Extremes of Astonishment, of Gratitude, and of Shame for so unexampled a Generosity, and Obligements, he neither had it in his Power to deserve or to requite; — but of all the various Agitations he was seiz'd with, there was none gave him half that Pain, as the Apprehension, that it could be by no other Means than herself, that his Letter to PHILECTA had been expos'd to DALINDA. — Her refusing to admit his Visits, very much strengthen'd this Opinion. He now began to be assur'd, that all his Attempts on that Lady wou'd be fruitless: and that either to gratify her Sex's Vanity, and fond to boast her Power, or in Obedience to the Rules of a Friendship pretty uncommon, (especially among Women) she had made a Sacrifice of his Pretensions. There was, indeed, nothing unnatural in this Supposition, and he was humbled beyond Expression to find he had been so much deceiv'd in the Language of the Eyes, which he was us'd to imagine he had a perfect understanding in, and which had seem'd to tell him, there was something in the Soul of that Lady which pleaded strongly in his behalf. — But resolv'd to be convinc'd, and not knowing any way to be so, but by going to DALINDA, chose rather to endure all the just Reproaches he must expect, from a Woman treated in the manner he had done her, than endure one Hour an Uncertainty so perplexing. — He, therefore, after the Messenger had waited a long time the Result of his Determination, ordered him to let the Lady, who sent him, know, he wou'd without fail wait on her at the time she desired.

40 *The MASQUERADERS: Or,*

I WILL not trouble my Reader with any repetition of what his Thoughts were that Night, 'tis easy to believe they were not fill'd with very violent Perturbations. — He was perfectly convinc'd, that the Woman, who of all the World he believed most worthy his Esteem, lov'd him with a Passion, which he cou'd not have hoped; and as he knew there was nothing wanting but his Presence, to banish all the Guards which Virtue rais'd in opposition to his Desires, — he resolv'd, some way or other, to get to the Speech of her. The Morning no sooner broke than he arose, and dressing himself, went once more to the House where PHILECTA lodg'd — designing to beg Permission for a moment's Conversation; but Love, and Fortune befriending him on this occasion, he found the Door open; and eager of Access, stay'd not till any body shou'd come to answer his Demand; but walking gently in, and going up Stairs with the same Precaution, got to the Apartment of the Charmer, without being observ'd. — The Door was only shut to; and in his attempting to knock, flew open, and admitted the impatient Lover. — He made no scruple of running immediately to the Chamber. — She was not yet risen, and had but that moment waked from a most pleasing Dream, of which he was the Subject: Imagination, always a Friend to Love, had given her, in *Sleep*, a full Idea of those Joys, which, when *Awake*, she durst not allow herself to think of. The rapturous Image left an unusual Languishment in her Eyes, they had nothing of their wonted Austerity remaining, and seem'd rather to invite than forbid the adventurous Gazer, who, in spite of his natural Boldness, was a little dash'd at his first Entrance. — He was two or three moments in the Room before she saw or heard him; but the agreeable Posture in which she lay, and which disclos'd to him Beauties, which her Dress had conceal'd, gave him Agita-

tions

FATAL CURIOSITY 41

tions too violent to permit him to continue long at the distance he then was; — he made but one step to the Bed-side, and throwing himself on his Knees, by that beseeching Posture endeavour'd to assure her he came not on any dishonourable Design. — She gave a little shriek at first sight of him; but not happening to be heard by any in the House, no interruption ensu'd, and he had all the Opportunity he cou'd wish, to persuade her she had no cause to fear his Presence — Her Soul was at this unguarded hour, too much dissolv'd, to permit her to assume any part of that Severity with which she had treated him when last he entertain'd her: — Yet trembling for the Consequence of this Visit, she entreated him to withdraw into the next Room, assuring him she wou'd there listen to all he had to say. — But he too well understood the Advantage he was possess'd of, to let it slip; and instead of retiring, drew by degrees nearer, and nearer, to the tempting Scene, till he was too close to be repuls'd without having taken some part of the Satisfaction his Passion required: — She cou'd not hinder him from kissing and embracing her, — from feasting his impatient Eyes with every naked Charm about her, — from roving o'er them with his glowing hands, with all the unlimited Freedom of luxurious Fondness, and at last, amidst Delight and Pain, a Rack of Exstasy on both sides, she more faintly denying, he more vigorously pressing, half yielding, half reluctant, she was wholly lost, — all her boasted Reason, — all her forceful Resolution, — all the Precautions of so many days, in one tumultuous Moment were o'ercome, — Love triumph'd over all, and revell'd in the Spoils of Honour. — The difficulty with which DORIMENUS had gain'd this Conquest, enhanc'd the Value; and the Restraint which PHILECTA had put on her Inclinations, made her now give a greater loose to them: which

42 *The MASQUERADERS: Or,*

which puts me in mind of what a late celebrated Author says on the like occasion;

She that so fiercely can resist Desire,

With double Rage will love, when Raptures fire.

And 'tis certain, when once a Woman of *Virtue* falls a Victim to *Love*, she is by as many degrees more vigorous in the *Gratification* of her Passion, as she was in her Efforts to *Overcome* it.

THE Transport over, the Conquest fully secured, the happy Lover was now easily persuaded to go into the next Room, and the yet unrepenting Fair rung her Bell for her Maid, to assist her in getting out of Bed. — They pass the remainder of that day together, and in the Intervals of their Endearments, beguil'd the Hours in Discourses on the various Turns, which had happen'd in the short time of their Acquaintance, and by what strange and extraordinary means each had arriv'd at the Point they now were at.

FOR about a Week, never any two People more indulg'd themselves in guilty Pleasures — they scarce were ever asunder in that time; DORIMENUS could not live without PHILECTA, nor PHILECTA without DORIMENUS; both abandon'd all other Conversation, and found nothing Agreeable, nothing Charming, but in each other: He thought all he could do too little to merit the Favour of a Woman qualified like her, and she imagin'd she could never enough requite a Constancy and Gratitude so uncommon — each made it their whole Study to oblige the other, and there wanted but a Certainty of its being permanent, to render their Condition a kind of Heaven on Earth.

BUT all this while, what were the Anxieties of poor DALINDA! what did she not sustain, rack'd with a fruitless Expectation ——— tortur'd with the
worst

worst Furies of the Soul, Suspence and Jealousy; — and notwithstanding all her Endeavours, altogether unable to find out the Cause of this Disappointment of her so lately elevated Hopes, in vain she writ, in vain she sent to DORIMENUS. He had neither the least remains of Inclination to visit her, nor time to make Excuses for his absence — his whole Soul and all his Moments were elsewhere devoted — he was now all PHILECTA's, as much as a Man of his Temper could be — and the forsaken Lady felt, in the Impossibility of finding out the Reason of his Change of Behaviour, Disquietudes almost equal to those the loss of him occasion'd. — The manner in which PHILECTA had discover'd the Declaration he had made her, and the Tenderness she cou'd not avoid feeling for him, made her far from suspecting what had happen'd between them afterward; nor would she ever have had it in her thoughts, that it was for her sake she was treated in this manner, if an Accident had not call'd her to visit, on some Business, a Relation, who liv'd on the other side the *Thames*. The House she was at, was the very next to one eminent for the Pleasure of its Situation, and fine Gardens; by a chance, unlucky to the Peace of those she spy'd, she look'd out of a Window, which had the command of part of the Walks, and saw her ungrateful DORIMENUS, and, what amaz'd her more, PHILECTA with him. — The sudden Rage which invaded her at so unexpected, and so shocking a Discovery, left no room for Discretion to interpose: She flew immediately out of the House she then was in, and into the Garden, where they still continued, with only a little alteration of Posture; for as before she had only barely seen they were together, without any other reason to believe them guilty, than that they were in a place so remote from any other Company; she now found them in an Arbour, he lying carelessly down
on

44 *The MASQUERADERS: Or,*

on a Carpet spread on the Floor, with his Head on her Lap, as she was sitting by him, she had one of her Hands fast grasped in his, and with the other she seem'd to toy, and stroke his Face and Breast. — 'Tis hard to say, whether Amazement or Indignation had the greatest share in her Breast; but 'tis easy to believe the Violence of both left no room for Consideration — the Lovers lost in the pleasing Contemplation of each other's Charms, nor saw, nor heard her, till running to the place where they were, and catching hold of PHILECTA, ——— 'Tis well, Madam! *she cry'd*; is this your boasted Virtue? — Your Reserve? — False, false Woman! ——— And you, *(continued she, turning to DORIMENUS)* ungrateful, and most perjur'd of all your deceiving Sex, what Excuse canst thou now make? — by what Artifices, by what Insinuations canst thou again betray my easy Nature? — Thou cool Designer! What can thy subtle-working Wit invent, to clear thy Honour, or PHILECTA's Innocence? — You both are known, detected, and be assured the Affair shall be no Secret ——— I will, at least, have the satisfaction of Revenge. ——— She had railed on, if DORIMENUS, who by this time had recover'd himself from the Surprize of her first Appearance, had not put a little stop to the career of her Tongue by these Words: ——— Well, Madam, *said he to her in an angry Accent*, what you suspect, you may, if you please, divulge; but I would have you consider well before you talk too much ——— Remember that DALINDA can suspect nothing of PHILECTA, but what PHILECTA is certain of DALINDA: ——— I would have you, therefore, be tender of this Lady's Honour, as you would preserve your own. ——— As for me, I will at any other time reply to your Upbraidings, but at present, you appear too warm for Argument. ——— He said no more, but taking

PHI-

FATAL CURIOSITY. 45

PHILECTA, who was almost dead with shame, by the Hand, and leading her with all possible speed to the Water-side, where a Boat waited for them, left the forsaken Fair to utter her Complaining to the unregarding Wind.

SHE was as good as her word however — the Adventure thro' her means became the Chat of the whole Town, and PHILECTA suffer'd a great deal from the Admonitions of her Relations and Friends, — all who had any concern for her Reputation, advised her to break off her Acquaintance with him, but that was a Task not so easy to be accomplish'd as they imagin'd — she could sooner have foregone her Life, than his Conversation, and 'tis impossible for any thing to be more exposed than the Affair between them.

BUT this was not the worst part of her Misfortune; an unexpected Occasion happen'd to call him into the Country soon after; and tho' he took leave of her with all the tender Protestations imaginable, an Overture of Marriage being there made him with a very agreeable Lady, 'tis thought he will easily be brought to accept it. — PHILECTA has heard the News, and to increase her Misfortune, finds herself with Child — The Agonies she now sustains in a too late Repentance, are not to be described. Undone in all which ought to be valuable, she curses the undoing Transport she so lately blest — and is sufficiently convinc'd how infinitely to blame she was, in indulging a Curiosity which proved so fatal to her Virtue, her Reputation, and her Peace of Mind; and which, 'tis highly probable, will in a short time be found so to her Life.



LAS.

FATAL CURIOSITY.

PARCELA, who was shrouded with shame, by the Hand, and looking her with all possible speed to the West, where a Boat waited for her, left the mansion, and so entered the Compartment.

She was as usual, and her words were, "the Adventure they are making, to the City of the whole Town, and a great number of friends, from the Administration, her Relations and Friends, all who had any respect for her Reputation, advised her to break off her Acquaintance with him, but that was a Task not to be so easily accomplished. — He could not be so easily dismissed, and he threatened her with a more formidable, and as impossible, for any thing he might expect, than the Affair between them.

But this was not the worst, and of her History. — Her unexpected Occasion happened to call him into one Country (country), and the Cook leaves of her with the latter. — The next day, he was at the house of a friend, and made him with a very agreeable party, the morning he will easily be brought to forget it. — But a few days he had the News, and immediately her Mother, with her Child. — The Agony she now felt, and her late Repentance, are not to be described. — What is to be said of her value, and her curiosity, and her Reputation, and her love of him, and which, perhaps, was in a short time, led to her fate.

10 JUL 68

10 JUL 68

10 JUL 68

LASSELIA:

OR, THE SELF-ABANDON'D. A NOVEL.

By Mrs. ELIZA HAYWOOD.

*Love various Minds does varioussly inspire ;
He stirs in gentle Natures gentle Fire,
Like that of Incense on the Altars laid ;
But raging Flames tempestuous Souls invade :
A Fire which ev'ry windy Passion blows,
With Pride it mounts, and with Revenge it glows.*

DRYDEN.

LASSIE

OR THE

SELF-ABANDONED

AND OTHER STORIES

BY MRS. ELIZA HAYWOOD.



Printed by J. G. & J. H. Stanger, 10, St. Martin's Lane, London, W.

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To the Right Honourable
The Earl of SUFFOLK
and BINDON.

MY LORD,



*WHEN I presume to entreat
your Protection of a Trifle
such as this, I do more to
express my Sense of your
unbounded Goodness, than if I were to
publish Folio's in your Praise. A great
and learned Work honours the Patron
who*

iv DEDICATION.

who accepts it, but little Performances stand in need of all that Sweetness of Disposition, so conspicuous in the Behaviour and Character of your Lordship, to engage a Pardon. 'Tis to be something of a piece with Heaven, to regard the Will more than the Merit of the Offering; and my Knowledge how zealous an Imitator you are in all Things else of that, gives me an almost assured Hope you will not swerve in this, only to punish my Presumption.

My Design in writing this little Novel (as well as those I have formerly publish'd) being only to remind the unthinking Part of the World, how dangerous it is to give way to Passion, will, I hope, excuse the too great Warmth, which may perhaps appear in some particular Pages; for without the Expression being invigorated in some measure proportionate to the Subject, 'twou'd be impossible for a Reader to be sensible how far it touches him,

or

D E D I C A T I O N .

V

or how probable it is that he is falling into those Inadvertencies which the Examples I relate wou'd caution him to avoid.

I take the liberty of mentioning this to your Lordship, to clear my self of that Aspersi^on which some of my own Sex have been unkind enough to throw upon me, that “ I seem to endeavour to “ divert more than improve the Minds “ of my Readers.” Now, as I take it, the Aim of every Person, who pretends, to write (tho’ in the most insignificant and ludicrous way) ought to tend at least to a good Moral Use; I shou’d be sorry to have my Intentions judg’d to be the very reverse of what they are in reality. How far I have been able to succeed in my Desires of infusing those Cautions, too necessary to a Number, I will not pretend to determine; but where I have had the Misfortune to fail, must impute it either to the Obstinacy of those I wou’d persuade, or to my own Deficiency in that very Thing

vj DEDICATION.

Thing which they are pleased to say I too much abound in—— a true Description of Nature.

But I will give your Lordship no farther Trouble than what proceeds from Gratitude; and with entreating you to accept my humblest Acknowledgments for all the unmerited Favours I have received, conclude,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's most Oblig'd,

Most Faithful, and

Obedient Servant,

ELIZA HAYWOOD.



LASSELIA:

O R,

The SELF-ABANDON'D.

A

NOVEL.

NEVER was a Court more resplendent with Beauties, than that of *France*, in the Reign of their late Monarch *Lewis XIV.* That Prince, in spite of his Ambition, found room for Love, nor could the incessant Hurry of his other Affairs deprive him of the Pleasures of Gallantry. He was for ever engag'd in some Amour: one Desire no sooner sicken'd, than another kindled in his Soul. But of all that had the power to charm him, none ever maintain'd a more absolute Dominion, than *Madam de MONTESPAN*; and if it was not so lasting as that of the celebrated *MAINTENON*, yet for the time it held, it was as

8. LASSELIA: Or,

as strong. In the House, and under the care of this great Lady, did the lovely LASSELIA receive her Education; who being her Niece, and extremely lov'd by her, 'tis not to be doubted but that she had all those Advantages and Improvements, which are necessary to accomplish a Maid of Quality for Conversations such as were suitable to her Character.

THE Mistresses of Kings are not consider'd in the same view with those of private Men: the Interest every one had in making their Court to Madam de MONTESPAN, and the perpetual resort of the best Company to her House, gave our LASSELIA, as she grew up, Opportunities of improving herself, which she could have found in no other place: and those Advantages, join'd to a natural Genius of her own, much more sublime than is ordinarily observed in Persons of her Sex, especially at such an Age, made her Behaviour surprizing to those of riper Years; grey Hairs would listen to her Talk with pleasure, the Delicacy of her Notions was such, that the Wisest would acknowledge themselves edify'd by her Conversation——But if the grave Part of the World were charm'd with her Wit and Discretion, the Young and Gay were infinitely more so with her Beauty; which tho' it was not of that dazzling kind which strikes the Eye at first looking on it with Desire and Wonder, yet it was such as seldom fail'd of captivating Hearts the most averse to Love. Her Features were perfectly regular, her Eyes had an uncommon Vivacity in them, mix'd with a Sweetness, which spoke the Temper of her Soul; her Mien was gracefully easy, and her Shape the most exquisite that could be; in fine, her Charms increas'd by being often seen, every View discover'd something new to be admir'd; and tho' they were of that sort which more properly may be said to persuade than command Adoration, yet they persuaded

The SELF-ABANDON'D. 9

suaded it in such a manner, that no Mortal was able to resist their Force ——— And, indeed, when Passion enters the Soul by such gentle and unperceiv'd Degrees, it generally takes a surer hold, and is with much less ease extirpated, than when it rushes all at once upon us, and boldly tells us that we must obey.

LASSELIA being such, and infinitely more agreeable than I have power to represent her, 'tis easy to believe she was not without a very great Number of Adorers: Both her Parents being dead, Madam de MONTESPAÑ was never at rest for the Sollicitations of those whom the Perfections of her beautiful Neice had attracted to desire her in Marriage: but that Lady having Affairs enough of her own to manage, troubled not herself much about it; and had LASSELIA been inclinable to alter her Condition, whether to her Advantage or not, 'tis probable the other, in spite of the Kindness she had for her, would not have taken much pains either to have forwarded or prevented it.

THE young, and as yet insensible Subject of this little History, thought herself happy in this Disposition of her Aunt, which gave her so much the liberty of acting as she pleas'd; for finding in herself rather an Aversion to Marriage, than any Inclination to it, nothing could have been so shocking to the Humility and Sweetness of her Disposition, as to have found herself oblig'd, either to have yielded to enter into a State, which, in the Humour she was at present, must have made her wretched; or, by refusing, incur the Displeasure of a Lady, who she consider'd as a Parent, and for whom she had the greatest Esteem, and tenderest Regard.

THUS charming, and uncharm'd, did she pass her Days in the most perfect Tranquillity that cou'd be; no austere Parent, or Guardian, to over-awe Aversion, and force her to receive with Smiles the

TO LASSELIA: Or,

Man she hated ——— No Hopes, no Fears, Suf-
pence, Perplexity, nor racking Jealousies, disturb'd
her Peace of Mind ——— she knew no Wish be-
yond what she enjoy'd ——— and if she thought of
Love at all, it was but to wonder at the Influence
she saw it have on others. Among the Numbers
that address'd her, there was not one whose *Ab-*
sence cou'd give her a moment's Pain, tho' several
whose *Presence* pleas'd; but then it was only such
a kind of Pleasure as might have flow'd from the
Conversation of one of her own Sex, equally quali-
fied with good Sense and Complaisance ——— a cold
Respect, or, at most, a bare liking of their Com-
pany, was all that the most favour'd could boast
of from her; nor did she once imagine she should
ever be brought to entertain any other Notions of
that uneasy Passion, than what she was at pre-
sent possess'd of ——— that it was all *Chimera*; and
that those who seem'd most fatally sway'd by it,
had only so long *affected* to be mad, that at last
they grew so in *Reality*.

'Tis possible, indeed, she never might have
chang'd her Sentiments, had she continued in *Paris*,
where she had already seen every body worthy her
Consideration, without confessing herself the least
susceptible of what so many had endeavoured to
inspire: But an unexpected Turn happening in her
Affairs, brought her to a different Scene of Obser-
vation, and convinc'd her how little, in spite of
her fine Sense, she knew the true Disposition of her
own Heart.

THE King coming one day to visit Madam *de*
Montespan, and hearing she was laid down to
Repose, contented himself with passing an Hour
or two in Talk with her fair Niece, designing no
more than to divert himself till the other shou'd
awake; but he was so infinitely pleas'd and sur-
priz'd with the Charms of her Conversation, ha-
ving never till that time had the Opportunity of
enter-

The SELF-ABANDON'D. II

entertaining her alone, that he cou'd have wish'd a longer Continuance of it.

HE was but just beginning to let her know the Satisfaction this Interview had given him, when he was prevented from saying more by the coming of Madam *de MONTESPAN*. 'Tis probable her Presence never had been so unwelcome before, and he testified the Chagrin he conceiv'd at it, by a tender Pressure of the young *LASSELLIA*'s Hand, as she withdrew, telling him she left his Majesty to a Conversation more worthy of entertaining him. As artless as she was, and as indifferent an Opinion as she had of Love, she easily perceiv'd she had inspir'd him with that Desire which bears the Name of it, and was so far from being proud of her Power, that it gave her a very great Uneasiness; she foresaw a world of Difficulties wou'd attend the Conquest of this Royal Slave, and heartily wish'd that what he had said to her, might prove to be only the Effect of an unmeaning Gallantry, and forgot as soon as spoke. But, alas! her Charms had made a much deeper Impression on the Heart of this amorous Monarch, than she desired they should; the very next Day confirm'd her Knowledge of it ——— Happening to meet her in a Gallery, as she was passing thro' to visit some Ladies in the Palace, he stopp'd her, and made so passionate a Declaration to her, that she stood in need of all her Wit to answer him in Terms which shou'd neither affront the Offers he made, nor encourage him to repeat them: But tho' her Replies to all he said, were full of Respect and Gratitude for the Consideration he seem'd to have of her, yet she maintain'd that cool Reserve, that Majesty of Modesty, which all Women, tho' in the lowest Rank of Life, owe so much to themselves to wear even to the highest, when their Virtue is assaulted; that it might have dash'd a Lover less accustomed to Success. But he was so

12 *L A S S E L I A : Or,*

well acquainted with the Ambition that most Women have of being the Favourite of a King, that he consider'd her Refusals only as the Result of what she might fear from the Indignation of her Aunt, Madam *de MONTESPAN*, and therefore sent *Monsieur le Brosse*, one who at that time was Gentleman of his Bed-Chamber, to let her know, That, if she pleased, she had it in her power to be greater than the Person she at present had a Dependence on, and to make her an Offer of a very fine Castle near the River *Seine* for her residence. *LASSELIA* was more concern'd than can be well express'd when this Message was deliver'd to her, and conjur'd him that brought it to return some Answer, in what manner she did not care, so it were such as would cut off all room to believe she ever could be prevail'd on to do any thing which might deserve such Bounties — Let the King, *said she*, think me imprudent, or unwise, his Opinion, nay, his Indignation, cannot give me more Chagrin, than does his Affection. It was in vain that the *Confidante* represented to her the Advantages there were in being Mistress to a King, she was not to be mov'd, nor had Grandeur any Charms when it was to be purchas'd at a Rate so dear as loss of Virtue: and he found himself oblig'd to return without being able to gain any thing from her, which might make his Master satisfy'd with his Negotiation.

BUT all this could not pass without the Observation of Madam *de MONTESPAN*; she had taken notice in what manner the King had look'd, when he took leave of her Neice the Day she had entertain'd him in her Absence — She had her Spies, which had inform'd her of his talking to her in the Gallery — and the coming of *le Brosse* to her House, and the private Conversation they had together, sufficiently confirm'd her, she had a Rival in her Neice, and fir'd her jealous Soul with

an

The SELF-ABANDON'D. 13

an inexpressible Indignation ——— She upbraided the innocent LASSBELIA with Falshood and Ingratitude, and vow'd a Vengeance suitable to the Cause; and it was to no purpose for a long time, that the other endeavour'd to clear herself from these Aspersions; Rage is always deaf. This Misfortune, as it was unforeseen, was the more terrible to be borne; nor is it to be wonder'd at, that she should be prodigiously alarm'd at what so nearly touch'd her Interest, and was so shocking to her Pride, to find the Power she had so long maintain'd over the Heart of one of the greatest Monarchs in the World, in such an imminent danger of being near an end; and to owe her Downfall to one of her own House, of her own Blood, and one who she herself had taken care to adorn with all those Accomplishments which had attracted Admiration, was such an Aggravation to her Discontent, as Words would but poorly represent.

ALL the Assurances that LASSBELIA gave her, that she would die rather than yield to injure her in the least, and the Detestation she express'd at the thoughts of such an Action, was not sufficient to pacify her ——— She could scarce believe there was a Possibility of for ever resisting the Addresses of a Monarch so every way agreeable, as all that knew him confess'd him to be ——— But if there were, the *Attempt* was enough; her haughty Soul could ill endure the sight of one who was thought more lovely than herself, and who had it in her Power to make her unhappy, if she pleas'd ——— But how to get rid of her, she could not tell; if she put her out of her House, she consider'd, that it would but give her the more Opportunity of being seen by the King, and receiving Proofs of his Passion; which, while she continu'd with her, he had still too much Respect publicly to avow. While she was in this Dilemma, the generous

LASSELIA perceiving her Discontent, and very much disquieted herself at the continued Sollicitations of a Monarch, whose Passion for many Reasons was no way pleasing to her, thought of a way to ease at once both her own and her Aunt's Uneasiness : And, desiring leave to wait on her in her Chamber, (for the other, of late, not well able to brook her Presence, had deny'd her that Privilege) approach'd her with these Words : Madam, *said she*, as I am the innocent Cause of your Chagrin, I come now to implore your Permission, to ease you of the sight of a Person who I am very sensible you no longer can behold with Satisfaction — The many Favours I have receiv'd in your House, would make me quit it with the utmost Concern : but when I consider, that your Goodness in suffering my continuance in it, renders you uneasy, I can do no less, in Gratitude, than remove — I intreat therefore, *added she, after a little Pause*, that I may depart : and since I have offended, tho' against my Will, the only thing I can do to contribute to your Peace, is, to take away the Cause ; and by this *voluntary* Doom I pass on myself, may have hope you will pardon a Crime which is *involuntary*. And where, *cry'd Madam de MONTESPAN hastily, (imagining perhaps her Intentions were very different from what they were)* where would you go ? Far enough, *reply'd the other*, from any Place that may give you Apprehensions that I mean any otherwise than to make you easy — You know I had a very great Intimacy with Mademoiselle VALIER, she is now retir'd into the Country with her Husband, and I only stay for your Permission to go to her ; she will be glad of my Company, and I can tarry there till those slight Impressions I have made on a Heart which ought only to be yours, are erased — I will not return till your Commands shall call me — or, if you please, my Banishment

The SELF-ABANDON'D. 15

ment from you, and *Paris*, shall be eternal. How! LASSELLIA, (*interrupted her Aunt, with an Air which at once express'd Astonishment and Joy*) are you in earnest? Can you for no other Motive than my Repose, be content to bury any part of your Time in a Solitude so remote from all those Gaeties your Youth has been accustom'd to? Not only Part, *resum'd she*, but All — Nay, my very Life, do you Service; and to convince you how little Share I have had in contributing to disturb you 'Tis kind indeed, *said Madam de MONTESPAN*, and I must confess you Generous and Grateful, beyond my Expectations; but I should give you but small reason to have the same Opinion of me, should I suffer you to do what you have offer'd — No, *pursued she with a Sigh*, I never will be outdone in Good-nature, you shall still say with me; tho' your fatal Beauty, like a Basilisk, murders my Quiet, and destroys my Hopes, we will not part — I am now convinc'd of your Sincerity, and till some Change in your Affairs makes it your Interest to leave me, I will run all Hazards rather than turn you hence. The Voice with which she pronounc'd these Words, made the discerning LASSELLIA easily perceive she wish'd not as she said; and repeating her Request, and assuring her with a great deal of Truth, that she desir'd nothing more than to be remov'd from the Persecutions she was every Day liable to from those Emissaries the King had employ'd, won her to afford a well-pleas'd Assent. After having concluded on her going, they began to think that Distance would be so far from a Protection from those Disturbances she would avoid, that being in any other House than that of *Madam de MONTESPAN*, would rather give an Opportunity for them; they both determin'd that the Place of her Retirement should be kept a Secret, and to that end a Coach, and only one Servant to attend it, was

16 *LASSELLIA: Or,*

order'd to be got ready at Midnight; and when all the Family were drown'd in Sleep, the willing Exile began her Journey, with this Satisfaction in her own Mind, that she eas'd another's of a Load of Care.

IT was but to *Collumiers*, a small Village about seven Leagues from *Paris*, that she went, and she reached there a little after Day-break. *Mademoiselle de VALIER*, and her Husband, receiv'd her with all the Demonstrations of Joy imaginable, tho' infinitely surpriz'd at so unexpected a Visit: She was perfectly well acquainted with their Secrecy and Discretion, and therefore made no Scruple of revealing the Cause which had induc'd her to come in that manner: and if before they had a very tender regard for her, it was now prodigiously encreased by their Admiration of her Virtue.

SHE liv'd with them for some time in all the Contentments imaginable — She partook in all the rural Diversions of the Place; and having her Mind once more at ease, made one in all the little Assemblies that were form'd by the Gentry thereabout. In spite of the distance from any great City, she found no want of Company; the Conversation of *Mademoiselle de VALIER* was very engaging at home; and whenever she had an Inclination to go abroad, the House of *Monsieur de l' AMYE* was not above a Bow-shot off; there she was always certain to meet good Company: For that Gentleman having been gone some time to *Paris*, in order to settle some Affairs, and take possession of an Estate lately left him by his Father, his Wife endeavour'd to compensate for his Absence, by making Entertainments for all those who had any pretence to Wit, of which she was a great Admirer — This Lady grew exceeding fond of *LASSELLIA* in a short time, nor was she other behind-hand in Acknowledgments for
he

The SELF-ABANDON'D. 17

the Kindness she receiv'd from her — Thus every thing was easy, every thing was gay at *Col-lumniers*, while the still discontented *MON-TESPAN* languish'd at *Paris* in continual Disquiets, and restless Perplexities; she found the Absence of her Neice had added but little to her Endeavours of retrieving the estrang'd Affections of the inconstant King — He was all Fury when first the News was brought him that *LASSELIA* had left the Town, and appear'd dissatisfied that her Aunt pretended Ignorance of the Cause — This Disgust, by little and little, encreasing, and heighten'd by her Jealousies, which she had not always Prudence enough to conceal, at last converted into a mortal Hatred; and this great Favourite saw herself reduc'd to a Condition pitiable by those who envy'd her before: so uncertain is a Happiness founded on Passion, and depending on the still wavering, everchanging Vows of faithless Man!

THE Felicity that *LASSELIA* all this while enjoy'd, was of another, and more durable Nature than that which Love, even at the best, affords; her Pleasures were unmix'd and pure, nor did she so much as dream there was a Day of Woe in store, which shou'd make her in vain look back, and wish for past Tranquillity: But now the time was come, when her Indifference and boasted Peace of Mind, were to be no more: Happening to be at *Madam de l' AMYE's* at *Ombre* one Evening, accompany'd by *Monsieur de VALIER*; and his Lady, their Diversion was on a sudden interrupted by a Servant running hastily into the Room, telling them his Master and two other Gentlemen were alighted at the Gate. 'Tis not to be doubted but that the Cards were immediately thrown aside, and every Body rose to receive them. The Welcome which *Madam de l' AMYE* gave her long absent Husband, was such as was

suitable to his great Merit, and long Absence; and the Returns he made, apologiz'd for the most violent Transport she cou'd have express'd: but these mutual Tenderesses were but of a short Continuance; the Husband after having saluted all those whom he found in Company with his Wife, with all the Complaisance and Gaiety imaginable, just as he came to *LASSELIA*, three Drops of Blood fell from his Nose, which stain'd a white Handkerchief she happen'd to have in her Hand. This Accident occasion'd a good deal of pleasant Raillery; Monsieur *de VALIER* told him, that had he been unmarried, this would have pass'd for an Omen of a future Union between him and the young Lady. Mademoiselle his Wife, and the two Gentlemen who had accompany'd *de l' AMYE*, made themselves merry for a good while on this Occasion; but the Jest was not so agreeable to Mademoiselle *de l' AMYE* as they, perhaps, imagined; being naturally pretty much addicted to Jealousy, these kind of Discourses gave her an Uneasiness which she was not able to disguise. Her Looks confess'd it, and her whole Behaviour was in a Moment so alter'd, that not a Person in the Company but perceiv'd it, and guess'd at the Cause. *De VALIER* having been but a late Acquaintance, and till now entirely ignorant of her Temper, was heartily vexed at what he had said, and endeavour'd, by a thousand Compliments, to restore her to her former Good-humour; but the Poison had too great an Influence to be easily expell'd; she knew her Husband to be of a Disposition amorous enough, and the Charms of *LASSELIA* were too prevailing, not to make her think there was a Probability, that what had been spoke in Raillery, might one Day prove too true in Earnest, she fell into so deep a *Resvery*, and appear'd so much dissatisfy'd when any thing was offer'd to rouse her from it, that Monsieur and Mademoiselle

The SELF-ABANDON'D. 19

domoiselle *de VALIER* thought it high time to take leave of her. *LASSELIA* being only introduc'd by them, cou'd not do it without the Proposal being first made by them, but was extreamly glad of the Motion, and from that Moment resolv'd never to make a Visit there again. When they came home, nothing was talk'd of but the *Foibles* of Madam, who had expos'd her Ill-humour for so trivial a Cause. Mademoiselle *de VALIER* laugh'd heartily at it, but *LASSELIA* had Reflections more grave; she was a little inclin'd to Superstition, and cou'd not forbear thinking the bleeding of *de l' AMYE*, just as he approach'd her, was a Presage of something extraordinary: Besides, she imagin'd something within her bade her beware, nor trust her Eyes to gaze on this dangerous Charmer. The Disorder she was in when he first enter'd the Room, wou'd have been visible to the Company, had any of them been at leisure to regard it; and the Flutter which still continued on her Spirits, confirm'd her, that the sight of him had wrought an Effect on her she had never felt before: But as she was Mistress of a vast deal of fine Reasoning, she exerted it all in examining from what Source these Disorders proceeded; loth she was to think she was falling into a Passion she had so long ridicul'd — and loth to imagine it was for a Man for whom it was neither consistent with Virtue, nor Discretion, to indulge it — Is it impossible, *said she to herself*, that the seeing a Person so every way agreeable as *de l' AMYE* cou'd give me Shocks such as, one wou'd think, cou'd only be inflicted by the Appearance of some horrid Spectre, some frightful Enemy to Nature! — What is there either in his Person or Behaviour to terrify! — Is not all about him lovely and engaging? — Oh! yes (*cry'd she after a little Pause*) I ne'er before beheld a Form so perfectly compleat, a Shape so exquisite, Eyes

so

20 *LASSELIA: Or,*

so bewitching, and Air so soft, so charming, and, too well remember, the fond Endearments he paid to Madam, first struck my Soul with that chill Horror, which ever since remains. Had he been in the same Circumstances with his two Companions, and receiv'd no other Welcome from that happy Woman, it would have been with Satisfaction alone I shou'd have regarded him — But, oh! (*continued she, bursting into Tears, which it was impossible for her to restrain*) he is marry'd, and 'tis Madam *de l' AMYE* only who can look on him without Confusion, such as I endure. By these kind of Arguments she was at last convinc'd, how fatal an Enemy to Repose, the sight of an Object too amiable may prove; but tho' she resolv'd not to give way to an Impression so pernicious, she found it impossible to erase it; she was still thinking how happy she might have been if *de l' AMYE* were unmarried, and how willingly she cou'd submit to be a Wife, if just such another Man were to be found. In this manner would she sooth her Imagination for a while; but then a sudden return of those uneasy Tremblings which, at first sight of him, possess'd her, would put an end to those pleasing Amusements; and she wou'd start like one in a Frenzy, and cry out, Oh! it was not for nothing that those ominous Drops of Blood fell from him on my Handkerchief! — It was not for nothing I was seiz'd with such an unusual Horror! — Nor is it in vain, that my Soul shrinks, and seems to dread a second Interview! — They are all, I fear, too sure Predictions of some fatal Consequence. Then, when she had a little yielded to these disturb'd Emotions, as if alarm'd of the Weakness she had been guilty of, wou'd she summon up all her Resolution, and endeavour to overcome those Terrors. Yet what, (*resum'd she*) what can happen worthy of my Fears! — What Power has one, so much a Stranger as *de l' AMYE*,

The SELF-ABANDON'D. 21

to injure me? — Perhaps I ne'er may see him more; or if I shou'd, where wou'd be the Danger? Thus did she torment herself when ever she was alone; and, in Company, appear'd the most alter'd in her Behaviour that ever was: All Diversions grew tasteless to her, and those Gaieties of Conversation which, in her Days of Indifference, she had the greatest Relish for, were now strip'd of all their *agreeable*, and became rather *teazing*, than any way *delightful*. Nor is this at all to be wonder'd at; whoever has known any thing of Love, will easily confess, that that Passion brings with it a consequential Train of Images, sufficient to fill the most extensive Soul, and too strong to suffer any Intermixture of Opposers.

THIS Change of Humour was too visible, not to be taken notice of by all that knew her: Mademoiselle de VALIER was extremely troubled at it, and, imagining it proceeded from her living in a Retirement she had not been accusom'd to, was fearful she was falling into a Melancholy, which might be dangerous; and therefore endeavour'd to divert her by all the Means her Good-humour and Friendship cou'd invent. The other, tho' Company was grown painful, and Solitude the only thing she coveted, yet cou'd not be so rude and disobliging as to refuse the kind Invitations made her, on purpose to drive away those Vapours with which she seem'd to be overwhelm'd.

ONE of those Scenes of Gaiety, to which the Wife of VALIER wou'd needs oblige LASSELLIA to go, was to a Wedding, which was to be solemniz'd at the House of a Relation of her's, some Miles distant from that in which they liv'd — The Nuptials were celebrated with a great deal of Magnificence, all the Nobility and Gentry of the Country, for many Leagues round, being invited: Amongst the Number was Monsieur and Madam
de

22 LASSELIA: Or,

de l' AMYE. This was the second Time LASSELIA had ever seen him; but if she was not altogether so painfully alarm'd as at the first, she felt enough to make her know she was agitated with Emotions, the Catastrophe of which she had good cause to dread. She cou'd not forbear, however, indulging the sweet Anxiety his *Presence* gave, tho' certain to condemn herself for it in his *Absence*: She examin'd each particular Charm which shone about his Form — She listen'd to every Word he spoke — Stretch'd wide each Faculty of her Soul, to take the whole of his Perfections in, till she became quite ravish'd in Contemplation —

THEY happen'd to dance together; and the easy and graceful Manner in which he entreated her to be his Partner, his fine Address, and the Sprightliness of Conversation with which he entertain'd her, added to that Admiration she before had been but too sensibly touch'd with for him.

AFTER this she had frequent Opportunities of seeing him; Madam *de l' AMYE* and *de VALIER* having, at this Wedding, renew'd that Intimacy which they formerly had together, and which that little Pique Monsieur *de VALIER*'s Words occasion'd, had for a time suspended, the two Families were seldom asunder — LASSELIA was always one among them, nor did she any longer seem desirous of Solitude: The Pleasure she took in the Company of *de l' AMYE* was too great to be resisted, nor did she any more make herself uneasy at those Shocks which, every now and then, endeavour'd to check the Transports she indulg'd — She thought it enough that she restrain'd her Wishes within the Bounds of Modesty; and perceiving not the least reason to imagine, by his Behaviour, that he would ever tempt her to transgress them, believ'd she might, without a Crime, indulge herself in those Felicities which at present appear'd so innocent

The SELF-ABANDON'D. 23

innocent — Thus born away with a Tide of Delight, which still increas'd from a nearer Conversation with him, all the Warnings of her good Genius were hush'd, and her whole Soul was overwhelm'd with Passion — Hence follow'd wild Desires! — Tumultuous Emotions! — The God of Love exerted his utmost Force, and prov'd how impossible it is, when once a Heart has given him Entrance, ever to expel him thence — But this she was not yet acquainted with, nor knew the Danger she was in; and tho' the greatest Security she cou'd have for her Honour, was the Insensibility *de l' AMYRE* seem'd to have of her Charms, yet she cou'd not forbear wishing he were otherwise — And would frequently sooth Imagination with a Belief he lov'd her: and in giving way to these destructive Tendernesses, *Fancy* took the Part of *Passion*, and in Dreams, wou'd represent him to her, dissolving, melting in amorous Languishments — Nor were her *sleeping* Thoughts the only ones that err'd this way; *waking*, the Charmer was ever in her View; she talk'd to him, form'd Answers such as 'twas probable he might in reality have made, had he been present — Nay, wrap'd in the extatick Contemplation, went so far sometimes (as she afterwards confess'd) as to kiss, embrace, and possess, in *Idea*, a thousand nameless Joys, which Love too soon inspires a Notion of: but these Excesses we'll suppose she permitted only when she found there was a Necessity by chearing her languid Spirits with an *imaginary Bliss*, to preserve her from falling into a *real Despair*: 'Tis certain, that at her guarded Hours, Honour was her chiefest Aim; nor wou'd she have wish'd to have been belov'd by *de l' AMYRE*, had she not thought herself sure of continuing Mistress of her Resolution — But, alas! how little do they know the Hazard they run, who depend on their own Strength alone for Protection.

24 *LASSELIA: Or,*

rection. Love is a subtle, and a watchful Deceiver; and directs the Votary he designs to bless, to make the Attack when the *Fair* is least capable of Resistance. It was in one of those longing, wishing Moments, already mentioned, when the amorous LASSELIA extended at her length on a fine grassy Bank, canopy'd o'er with shading Jessamins and spreading Vines, was told a Messenger waited with a Letter, which, by no means, he wou'd deliver into any Hand but her own: She was unwilling to quit the sweet Retirement she was in, and carelessly order'd the Person shou'd come to her, imagining it was some body sent from Madam de MONTESPAN, and gave herself but little Concern what the Mandate might contain: But when she received it from the Messenger, who seem'd to be a Country-Fellow, and knew the Hand to be *de l' AMYE's*, which she had often seen before in Songs and little Pieces of Poetry, what Tongue can express the Surprize she was in! — She could not imagine on what Occasion he shou'd write to her, and was once or twice about to return it unopened to the Hand that brought it; but her ill Fate repell'd those Dictates of her Guardian Angel, and confus'd and trembling, now blushing with Shame, then pale with Fear, she broke the fatal Seal, and read these Lines.



To the Divine LASSELIA.

H EAVEN, Love, and the more powerful Charms of the adorable LASSELIA are not to be withstood! long have I struggled with a Passion which is not the less unvanquishable, because it is hopeless; but, like Oil pour'd on Flames, all my Endeavours

The SELF-ABANDON'D. 25

deavours serve but to make the aspiring Blaze more violent, and now 'tis grown as impossible to be conceal'd, as it is to be overcome — I burn, consume, and die, in inward Agonies — Pardon this Declaration — the World, alas! — the prying, judging World — will soon discover the Secret in my alter'd Looks; but a Day more, perhaps, and I shou'd have been reported LASSELIA's Slave, before LASSELIA's self had known it — and I wou'd not, methinks, have you, who caus'd, the last to pity what I feel — I am persuaded there is a Stock of Mercy in your Soul, that, whether you will or no, will induce you to compassionate a Despair which the wretched Circumstance I am in forbids me to hope you will relieve — But whatever Sentence you are pleas'd to inflict on me, let me from your own Mouth receive it, and I shall never repent that I am ordain'd,

Your Everlasting Adorer,

De l' AMYB.

I wou'd have been impossible for LASSELIA, had she endeavour'd it, to conceal the swift Vicissitudes of her rolling Thoughts while reading; alternate Joy and Shame, Surprise and Fear, and sometimes a Start of virtuous Pride and Indignation, sparkled in her Eyes — a thousand different Passions succeeded one another in their turns — all too fierce to be restrain'd, and too sudden to admit Disguise. But, alas! she took no care to do it; she suspected not that she had a dangerous Observer in the Person who deliver'd her the Letter; nor 'tis possible, in the Confusion she was in, remember'd any body was near her — Again she attempted to read over the dear surprizing Lines, but had not Power; the strange Disorder of her fluttering Heart, depriving the Blood of its usual

26 *LASSELLIA: Or,*

usual Circulation, all her Limbs forgot their Function, and she sunk fainting on the Bank, in much the same Posture she was in before she had rais'd herself a little to take the Letter. How much wou'd such a Sight have transported *de l' AMY E!* — How much did it transport him! for it was no other than himself, who, disguis'd in the Habit of a *Rustick*, had been his own Messenger, and was Witness of all the different Agitations his Declaration had occasion'd — Encourag'd by them, and 'tis probable by some Glances he had before observed — and prompted by his own violent Desires, which, from the first Moment he beheld her, had taken possession of his Soul; all those little Fears, and distant Awe, which generally accompany *Love* in its beginning, were no more. He threw off his upper Garment, and a black Peruke which had serv'd him as a Disguise, and flinging himself down by her, with a thousand Kisses and Embraces, at once restor'd her to that Sense she had so lately lost, and shew'd her the Deceit he had been guilty of — It was in vain she struggled to rise — in vain that she endeavour'd to repel the soft Endearments of his Lips and Arms; her Eyes confess'd the unwilling Transport of her Soul, and told him all he wish'd to ask: Nor was he scrupulous of letting her know how well he was acquainted with his Happiness — he made her sensible of it by a thousand Liberties, which a Man who had not been certain of Forgiveness, wou'd not have dared to take — She had too much Frankness in her Nature, and had been too little accustomed to Artifice, to be able to disguise her Sentiments in a Juncture like this — *Surprize* at first had depriv'd her of all those necessary Cautions she wou'd else have made use of; and now *Love!* transported, raptur'd *Love!* wou'd not suffer her to have recourse to them — Trembling and panting, betwixt Desire and Fear, at last she lay

The SELF-ABANDON'D. 27

lay resistless in his Arms, with faltering Accents confess'd a mutual Ardor; and if he did not obtain the highest Favour she cou'd grant, he had too much to boast of, to fear she cou'd deny him any thing; and 'tis probable that he had not left her without the utmost Gratification of his Wishes, had he not been apprehensive of a Discovery either from Madam *de VALIER*, or some of the Family, whom the Coolness of the Evening might invite to that Place, and which was not a great distance from the House — He wou'd not part, however, till he had engag'd a Promise from her to make him fully blest the next Opportunity should offer; which, as he told her, was his Fault, if not contriv'd with a Speed suitable to the Impatience of the Love he profess'd.

I DOUBT not but this early Condescension in *LASSELLIA*, will be of so great Prejudice to her Character, that it will take off the Pity which is really due to the Misfortunes it brought on her; and I have nothing to alledge in her Behalf, but that the long Suppression of a Passion which she had always consider'd as fruitless, now on a sudden let loose, was beyond the Power of Reason to restrain — To add to this, tho' both, I am afraid, will seem too weak to excuse her, never was Man so form'd to charm as *de l' AMYE*. I have heard several of his own Sex, who knew him, aver they never saw any thing so lovely, an Air so noble, so majestick, and withal so soft and tender — Eyes so bewitching — a Shape so excellent — such a Harmony of Parts — such an agreeable Regularity throughout the whole — Then for his Wit and Conversation, it was not to be equall'd — he was so perfect a Master in the Art of Persuasion, that whoever would resolve on any thing, must be sure not to hear him plead against it; so impossible was it to dissent from him in Argument, or continue in any Opinion he seem'd to disapprove —

28 LASSELIA: Or,

prove — One of the many Letters which pass'd between him and LASSALIA, being found among some other Papers, since both their Deaths, may give some little *Idea* of what he was : which, tho' it was writ by a Woman in Love to Madness, and one who had abandon'd all things for her Passion, has been acknowledged by those of cooler Sentiments, and consequently better capable of judging, to be no more than what Perfections, such as his, might justify.



LASSALIA to her most Dear, most
Lov'd, and most Ador'd de l'AMYE.

TOU command me to tell you, my Dear, my first, my only, my everlasting Love ! in what manner I pass my Hours in your Absence ? — 'tis a Question I know not how to answer — for, methinks, I am never absent from you — I have your Image ever in my View — your Voice always in my Ears — so strongly does Imagination bless me, that believing you indeed are present, I stretch my Arms to clasp the dear Illusion, and only then am undeceived, when back they come, and miss the warm Embrace — Oh ! to what elevated Height does Love, like mine, transport the Soul ! a thousand times I have ask'd myself which of your Charms had most the Power to move me — which of my Senses receiv'd the noblest Pleasure — and in Idea travelled through all the mazy Wonders of your Mind and Person, but never cou'd decide the mighty Contest — all were alike enchanting ! — all equally transporting ! — Last Night employing my fond Thoughts in their usual Contemplation

The SELF-ABANDON'D. 29

*temptation, a Standish happening to be on the Table,
I took up the Pen, which, without the Aid of any
Muse to guide it, run into these Lines, which I have
ventur'd to call*

The Impossibility; or, the Combat of the SENSES,

*When on thy Form I feast my ravish'd Eye?
I think no Bliss cou'd Want of Sight supply;
Or, when the Musick of thy Voice I hear,
My Soul is all collected in my Ear!
What envious Darkness wou'd in vain deny,
Th' attentive Faculty does well supply:
Thy Charms are such, each can make known the rest,
And all by one is to the Sense exprest;
Whether thou speak'st in Looks, or smil'st in Words,
The present Joy no higher Wish affords;
But when — Oh! who Infinity can speak!
Imagination owns itself too weak,
When with fond circling Grasp my straining Arms
Press to my Bosom thy whole Heaven of Charms!
When all! at once! the thousand Ways I prove,
Which make, indeed, Divinity in Love!
My ravish'd Heart tumultuous Pleasure swells,
Nor Fear, nor Shame, th' unruly Rapture quells;
With wild Delight each hurry'd Sense alarm'd,
'Tis Insolence to say which most is charm'd:
Each Look, each Word, each Touch, each melting Kiss,
Gives raging Extasy! — distracting Bliss!
Amidst that Sea of Wonders Thought is lost,
My Soul no more can nice Distinction boast;
Excess of Transport does itself destroy,
And Life flies trembling from th' o'erpouring Joy.*

*Let the kind Meaning excuse the bad Poetry and
Deficiency of Expression: For, oh! I own no Words
can reach thy Worth — there are two Things in Na-
ture, which never can be described by Art; and they
are,*

are, that Profusion of Perfections thou art stor'd with, and my Adoration of them — but if thou would'st guess at the latter, hasten to my Arms, for 'tis only there thou canst have any just Notion how much — how truly thou art Master of the Soul of thy

Ever-Passionate, Ever-Tender, Ever-Faithful

LASSELIA.

BUT, to return : The unthinking Fair was no sooner left alone, and had leisure to reflect on what the Hurry of her Spirits had before prevented her from doing, than she reproach'd herself for suffering the Secret of her Soul to be so easily discover'd by him from whom she ought most to have conceal'd it — But, alas ! she now had gone too far in the fatal Labyrinth of heedless Passion, to know how to retreat ; and the Arguments he had made use of to persuade her it was no Crime to bless a Love so perfect as his, had the same Effect they ordinarily work'd on all whom he endeavour'd to bring to his Opinion ; to make her think as he did — and the greatest Matter of Concern to her, was that she so *soon* had condescended — She fear'd the easy Attainment of his Wishes, wou'd, in a little time, make her seem cheap in his Esteem — and such an Apprehension was a Dagger to her Soul ; she resolv'd, therefore, that in spite of the Promise she had made him, to *delay* the Performance of it, and put him off till Time, Assiduity, and some further Proofs of his Sincerity, should render her yielding more the Effect of Gratitude than Inclination — This, 'tis possible, she might have *endeavour'd* ; tho', if we consider the little Government she had of her Passion, 'tis scarce to be believ'd she wou'd have been able to accomplish, if an unexpected Summons to *Paris* had not broke all her Measures, and left her no
Choice

The SELF-ABANDON'D. 31

Choice, but either to run immediately into the Arms of *de l' AMYE*, or quit all thoughts of him for ever — The very next Morning, after that Evening which she had past some part of in the manner already described, she received a Letter from her Aunt, *Madam de MONTESPAN*; the Contents of which were these.



TO LASSELIA.

IF you left Paris, as you pretend you did, meerly for the sake of my Repose, you will make no Difficulty in returning to it, when you know it is my Interest calls you — The unjust King has treated me in a manner I should disdain to acknowledge, were there not an absolute Necessity you shou'd know it — I have either been betray'd by some I have put Confidence in, or my ill Genius has whisper'd him, that I have but deceiv'd him in feigning an Ignorance to what Part of the Country you are retir'd — Since you left me, I have never receiv'd any Mark of his former Favour; and of late (what will not arbitrary Authority dare!) he has, even to my Face, avow'd his Passion — Last Night he left me with Menaces, such as I too well know him not to dread, that I shou'd dearly repent my Attempt of eluding him by an Artifice too shallow not to be seen through — In fine, I perceive every day my Court decrease — I am no longer solicited — no longer hurry'd with the Attendance of petitioning Courtiers — sure Marks of a declining Favourite — all that can re-establish me in my former Interest with him, is your Return — I can boldly demand a Support for my Ambition, when I consent to the Destruction of my Love, and to the Death of my own Hopes, bring a belov'd Rival to his Arms —
Make

Make haste, therefore, thou fatal Beauty! to Paris, to the sight of an adoring, impatient Monarch; a Monarch, who wants but Constancy to make him equal with the Angels—— Haste, I say, to bless his Eyes—— and by making him happy, in part retrieve the Injury you have, tho' unwillingly, done the

Unfortunate

MONTESPAN.

P. S. Come, if possible, with the same Expedition as you went—— I have sent this Moment to your Royal Lover, to acquaint him I have discover'd where you are, and that I expect you to-morrow—— Delay it not, unless you wish to see my Ruin.

SUCH a Command as this was as vexatious, as it was surprizing to the Person who receiv'd it — Had her Inclinations been in the very same Position as when she left *Paris*, she wou'd have been far from consenting to return to it, on the Terms propos'd; but as her Heart was now entirely taken up with the Thoughts of *de l' AMY E*, to endure the Addresses of another, was detestable to her —— Love gave this happy Favourite infinitely the Preference in her Esteem, over the greatest and most agreeable Monarch in the World —— To be the Mistress of *de l' AMY E*, tho' in a Cottage, she look'd on as a Blessing superior to all the ambitious Views which tempted her in the Embraces of a King; but resolved, if possible, not only to find some Expedient utterly to escape what was her *Aversion*, but also to delay the Gratification of her *Wishes* till Time shou'd render them more excusable —— To this end, she communicated Madam *de MONTESPAN*'s Letter to Monsieur *de VALIER* and his Wife, entreating their

The SELF-ABANDON'D. 33

their Advice, how she shou'd avoid a Danger which so imminently threaten'd her Virtue. The noble-minded Pair, little imagining that she had any other Reasons for refusing to return to *Paris*, than those which had oblig'd her to quit it, and altogether ignorant of what had pass'd between her and *de l' AMY*, applauded her Resolution; and told her, that they cou'd not enough extol her Bravery of Soul, who, to preserve her Honour, cou'd be blind and deaf to all the enchanting Charms of Power and Grandeur, and chuse rather to be bury'd in an *innocent Obscurity*, than shine the Envy of the World in *guilty Greatness*. These Encomiums were not perhaps so pleasing to *LASSELLIA* as they imagin'd; a Consciousness of not meriting what they said, embitter'd all the Sweets such Praises, if deserv'd, wou'd have bestow'd: therefore waving all that might remind her how really *Criminal* she was, while she appear'd all *Virtue*, she begg'd them to think of some Method by which she might evade the Commands of *Madam de MONTESPAN*, and the Sollicitations of the *King*. This was no small Difficulty to bring to pass; it was not to be doubted, since that Lady had been prevail'd upon to sacrifice her Love to her Ambition, so far as to become an Intercessor, but she wou'd proceed to compass what she aim'd at, by all imaginable Measures——It seem'd therefore an Impossibility that *LASSELLIA* cou'd be any more safe at *Collumiers* than at *Paris*; but where she shou'd retire, or on whose Fidelity she cou'd depend for Concealment, was the Question: Neither *Mademoiselle de VALIER*, nor Monsieur knew of any body on whom they dared depend in any Affair of so much Consequence, which, if divulg'd, or by any Accident discover'd, might involve the Persons concerned in it, in the Displeasure of a King, who was not of a Humour to pardon Indignities of this nature. *LASSELLIA*

34 *LASSELIA: Or,*

perceiving they were in a Pause, and uncertain what to advise her to, and knowing very well she must immediately resolve on something, spoke to them in this manner: Since (*said she*) the only Person on Earth, from whom I could have expected Shelter from the King's Addressee, has been drawn to a Resolution to betray me to him, it will be in vain to hope that, by tarrying here, I can escape the Snares laid for me; Arbitrary Power can easily find Means to force me hence: I will therefore go where, I believe, I may promise myself an unknown, and therefore safe Retreat; and because I will not oblige either of you to the Constraint of an Untruth, for, doubtless, you will not pass unexamined, I will not acquaint you with the Place of my Retirement, till the Noise of my having left you is entirely over. These Words gave a good deal of Satisfaction to the Persons they were address'd to, being unwilling to be brought under the Displeasure of the King by detaining her, and more unwilling to yield her up a Victim to his unwarrantable Passion. — They presently imagin'd it was to some *Monastery* she wou'd fly for Refuge, and commended her Discretion in concealing the Name of it; well knowing, that if it were discover'd, not even that holy Sanction would avail against the united Commands of the King and Madam de MONTESPAN, and the very *Religious* themselves bescrupulous of entertaining a Person in opposition to their Power.

BUT I doubt not but the Reader will easily guess it was not to be a *Recluse* that LASSELIA intended; however, she was willing enough to let Monsieur and Mademoiselle de VALIER continue in their Opinion that it was so, and they all concluded that she should leave their House the next Night. She told them she would depart in the Habit of a *Pilgrim*, and for the first Night take up her Lodging at a common Inn, from which she
knew

The SELF-ABANDON'D. 35

knew how to get conveniency to be carry'd to the Place she design'd to go to ; and for the better deceiving Madam *de MONTESPAN*, Mademoiselle should write to her, taking no notice that she knew any thing of her having order'd *LASSELIA*'s Return ; but to acquaint her, that that young Lady had left *Collumiers* unknown to any body ; and that both herself and Husband were in the greatest Consternation imaginable what was become of her, and for what Cause she had, in such a manner, quitted a Family, whose Care it had been to use her with all possible Respect. This Contrivance was applauded by all concern'd in it ; and Mademoiselle immediately went about providing a *Pilgrim's* Habit with the utmost Secrecy and Caution, for not one of the Servants were to be trusted with it.

IN the mean time *LASSELIA* had her Thoughts full of Confusion ; it was to *de l'AMYE* she had determin'd to go ; his Arms were her intended Sanctuary, and his Love her Asylum ; but how to let him know what had befallen her, was a Perplexity she knew not how to remove : To write to him, was an Impossibility, without having the Affair known to the whole Country ; and, as if Fortune had a Design to contradict her Inclinations, he happen'd not to come to *de VALIER*'s. All Things being ready, and the Evening appointed for her Departure arriv'd, she grew almost distracted what Course she should take ; her going was unavoidable, unless renouncing all she had said, and blasting her own secret Wishes, she could have contented herself to remain there till a second Mandate, back'd with Force, should have oblig'd her to return to *Paris*. And where to go she knew not, nor could think of any plausible Pretence whereby she might advertise *de l'AMYE* of her Proceedings : The Distraction of her Mind shov'd it self in her Countenance, she was ready

36 *L A S S E L I A : Or,*

to sink with Apprehension what might happen to her, wandring alone, a Stranger, and uncertain where she should find Shelter, even from the Weather — While Madamoiselle *de VALIER* was helping to dress her like a *Pilgrim*, she trembled, and had scarce Strength to suffer any thing to be done; but this pass'd for the Trouble she was in at being oblig'd to depart from them in a manner so odd; and, with much ado, she was at last equipt. The Care of Monsieur and his Lady had dispatch'd all the Servants, some one way, some another, that when the fair *Pilgrim* was to make her *Exit*, there was no body in the House but them three. The Parting was extreamly moving; Madamoiselle held her in her Arms for some time, without being able to let her go, while the other seem'd as unwilling to get loose, till Monsieur reminding them, that probably some of the Family might return, and disappoint all the Measures they had taken, they broke with mutual Tears from one another's Embrace. The Lady retir'd to her Closet, to pray for a good Event of this, as she thought, pious Fraud; and her Husband conducted the disguis'd Fair-One to the Road, where she desir'd him to leave her, assuring him she would write by the first Opportunity, to give notice *how* she was, tho' not *where* she was.

THE Reader's Imagination here must help me out, for Words wou'd be insufficient to represent what 'twas *L A S S E L I A* endur'd, when left alone; all that one can think of Dread, of Anxiety, was short of her enduring—She was naturally timorous; and having never been expos'd to any Dangers, now all at once to brave so many, was more than all the Resolution she had muster'd up could enable her. She accused *del' A M Y E* of Ingratitude and Coldness, that he had not been at *de VALIER*'s these two Days—— Oh! (*said she to herself*) had he lov'd with that Ardency as he pretended,

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tended, a Sympathy of Souls would have brought him ——— By Intuition he would have known I was about to do something that requir'd his Aid— Is Love a Divinity, and does any Spark of it inform his Breast, and not by some secret Impulse warn him that his *LASSIELIA* has for his sake, abandon'd herself to all that can be thought of Misery and Horror? Thus did she upbraid the Passion that possess'd her, while wandring up and down the *Fields*, for the Fears she was in, wou'd not suffer her to keep the *Road*—— The sight of any Passengers, tho' at a distance, terrify'd her beyond expression; she imagin'd that, if seen, she shou'd be known in spite of her Disguise, and her distracted Apprehension form'd a thousand Ideas of Dangers all frightful and hideous to Nature! — The Darkness coming on, encreased them, and she would now have given all the World to have been in some Place of Shelter; but she was wholly unacquainted with the way to any Inn, and being stray'd a good distance from the Road, was hopeless of finding it. 'Tis probable, in her present Fears, she would have return'd to *de VALIER's*, had she known her way back; but that was also impossible; and as she had run herself into this Misfortune, there was nothing for her to do, but patiently to bear whatever might be the Consequence. It would be too tedious to repeat the Lamentations she made, or the various Turns of Anguish which the different Passions created in her Soul: So I shall only say, that when it grew quite dark, she withdrew to a little *Copse*, which she found in the middle of the Field; and there covering herself as well as she cou'd with her *Pilgrim's* Weed, lay all Night on the Earth, no other Bed than a few fallen Leaves, nor Canopy, than the Skies: Hard Lodging for a young Lady bred in all the Delicacies of the most pompous and magnificent Court of *Europe*!

38 *LASSELLIA: Or,*

'Tis easy to believe she rested not much, her Grievs and Uneasinesses were of a Nature too violent to admit the Influence of the God of Sleep, nor did the Dawn afford her any Consolation, she was still in the same wretched State; and after casting in her Mind a thousand various Projections, which all seem'd impossible to accomplish, she laid herself down again, quite stupid with her Grievs; resolving, as much as she had power of resolving, on any thing, to rise no more.

BUT she had not continued long in this Lethargy of Thought, before she was rous'd from it by a sudden and loud Noise of Horses, Hunting-Horns, and a great Cry of Dogs; they rush'd just by the Place she was in, and had not the Gentlemen been too eager on their Game to regard any thing else, she must needs have been discover'd by them, as they pass'd, in spite of her leafy Covert. The unexpected Sound made her start at first hearing; but lifting up her Head a little, as much as she had Courage, and perceiving what it was that had occasion'd it, she slunk down again, trembling for fear she shou'd be seen, and continu'd in that Posture for some time: At last, hearing nothing but the rustling of the Leaves blown to and fro by the Winds, she once more ventur'd to rise, and walk; not that she had any Hope of mending her Condition, but to seek a Place more remote to die in. She had not gone many Paces from the *Copse*, which had been her Habitation that Night, before she saw a Man on Horseback, riding leisurely cross the Field just opposite to her — All the Terrors her confus'd Imagination had created, return'd with double Force at this Sight; and endeavouring to avoid him with too much Precipitation, her Feet happen'd to be entangled with some bushy Twigs that lay in the way, and down she fell. She wou'd have rose nimbly enough, but the same spriggy Substance

Substance which had thrown her, still hung about her, and all she cou'd do was insufficient to disengage herself, till the Gentleman, perceiving the Accident, alighted from his Horse, and ran to her Assistance: But how shall I set forth, as it deserves, that vast Excess of insupportable, unutterable Joy, which rush'd at once into her Soul, when looking up, she saw in the Person she had fled, him whom to meet she had run so many Dangers; her dear, her ador'd *de l' AM YE* — The swift Vicissitude from the Extreme of one Passion to another was too violent for her Weakness to sustain — it took away all power of Utterance, or of Motion. Mademoiselle *de VALIER* had so artificially disguis'd her, that till finding she was fainting away, he began to pull the things from her Face, in order to give her Air; he knew not to whom it was that Pity and Good-nature had engag'd him to do that good Office: But when the Face of *LASSERIA* was discover'd, the same, or if possible, a greater degree of Transports than she had felt, were now his Turn to Experience — both were too much lost in Rapture to express it by any other way than Kisses, Embraces, and all the fond Endearments of mutual Extasy — Words were too poor, too mean Acknowledgments of the unbounded Bliss of such a Meeting — nor cou'd they, for some Minutes, be able to relate to each other the Means by which it came to pass; till Curiosity claiming a Share in his other Emotions, he contented himself to give a little Truce to the tumultuous Pleasure he enjoy'd in her Embraces, to ease his Wonder at seeing her in that Garb and Place; which she, endeavouring to recollect herself, as much as possible, oblig'd him in, by shewing him Madam *de MONTESPAN*'s Letter, and acquainting him with the Reasons why she had left *Paris*; and since the House of *de VALIER* — Such a Discovery must have been

an Addition, if it cou'd have admitted of any, to the Passion he profess'd for her — to fly from the Embraces of a King, to lose for ever all the Advantages she might have expected from the Favour of so great a Lady as Madam de MONTESPAN, and to endure such Terrors, such certain Hardships as had been her Portion the Night before, and might have continued on her till Death had put an end to them, had not Chance directed him that way, only for the uncertain Hopes of finding a safe Harbour in his Arms at last, was such a Proof of condescending Tenderness, of Love the most sublime, the most violent that ever was, that he confess'd it far surpass'd all possibility of a return, and grew even painful to a grateful, generous Heart, which, he said, had not the means to thank, as it deserv'd, such a profusive Waste of lavish Kindness — But LASSELIA soon remov'd that Discontent, by assuring him she shou'd think herself more happy in the Conquest of his Heart, than in that of the whole World; and that all she entreated of him, shou'd be Constancy. This little amorous Contest being over, she began gently to reproach him for the want of that Impatience, which, by herself, she knew was incident to Love. How cou'd you, (*said she*) after so many tender Declarations on your Side, and Condescensions on mine, have the Inhumanity to keep two long Days from the only Place where you cou'd expect to see me? — Had you been kind enough to have sought me at de VALIER's, what thousand Afflictions had you sav'd me — all the Terrors of this last cruel Night had been unselt, and in their room I had been possess'd of Joys inconceivable — Bliss without a Name, and which is no where to be found but in the Presence of my ador'd de l' AMYE. You do well, (*reply'd he, tenderly embracing her*) you do well, my Angel! by the di-
vine

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vine Softness of your *last* Words, to make me Reparation for the injustice of your *former* ones. — Oh! did you know on what a Rack of high-rai'd Expectation I was kept, you would not blame, but pity me — to a Man in my Circumstances, Opportunities are scarce; nor cou'd I, in all that Age of Hours, which you call but two Days, find one which I cou'd hope wou'd bless me, till, mad with the Delay, I contriv'd a Hunting-Match, and invited *de VALIER* to be Partaker of it, and at the same time entreated his Wife wou'd bear mine company at our House, till the Chase shou'd be over. I flatter'd myself with a Belief you wou'd discern my Meaning, and make some Pretence to stay at home, while I wou'd, unperceiv'd, have drop'd my Company, and stole unsuspected to that dear Bower where first I had the glorious Discovery of your tender Sentiments; but all these Hopes were dash'd, and I wonder how I surviv'd the killing News, or that at least my Countenance did not discover how nearly I was interested, when *de VALIER*, at his coming this Morning, told me you had last Night left his House, unknown to all the Family; and that it was the greatest Mystery in Nature, on what Occasion, or to what Place, you were retir'd — The Force I have done myself, since this Information, in putting on a constrain'd Good-Humour to him and the rest of the Company, can by nothing be made known to you, but by your own dear extensive Imagination; and I shall only tell you, that not able to endure it longer, I took the Advantage of their Eagerness to pursue a Stag just rouzed, and turn'd from them to indulge a Melancholy I believ'd I had but too just a ground for — I was resolving, under the pretence of travelling for Improvement, to put myself into some Disguise, and search the Country round, till I had found you — when Chance! — bless'd Chance! which from henceforward shall

be my Deity, brought you to my Sight, and in a Moment chang'd the Hell of my Despair, to all the Heaven my Soul is capable of possessing. A thousand Kisses, and strenuous Embraces, clos'd this Discourse; nor wou'd they ever have known when to have given over so delightful an Employment, but that a repeating Watch, which he happened to have in his Pocket, striking Eleven, reminded him that 'twas possible the Hunters might return, and that this was no fit Place to continue their amorous Entertainment; therefore, remounting his Horse, and taking her up behind him, who joyfully put herself into his Protection, he rid a quite contrary way to that he expected them to come, and stopping at an Inn, where he had some little Acquaintance, he recommended her to the People of the House, and charging them to take particular Care of her, without asking any Questions who or what she was, forc'd himself to leave her, having first obtain'd a solemn Promise from her, that she would endeavour, by Repose, to recover the Fatigue she had undergone, assuring her that he wou'd return before Night. She doubted not the Performance of his Promise, both in this and every thing else; *Love* is ever credulous, and inspires so good an Opinion of the darling Object, that it is not without great Difficulty the Heart which harbours it, can be brought to believe any thing to the Prejudice of what it wishes, even where there is the greatest Ground for Suspicion; and, indeed, there was here Occasion sufficient for an implicate Faith; the little Knowledge she had for the Principles of *de l'AMÉ*, was but a too reasonable Cause for Doubt, that when he had nothing more to obtain, he might retain as little Regard for the Person who so generously gave him all, as his Sex ordinarily do—it was but a Chance whether by putting herself under his Protection, she shou'd not fall into the most miserable

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ble Circumstance to which a fond believing Woman can possibly be subjected; and in such a Venture there were ten thousand Blanks to one Prize. But *Fortune* in this Particular was on her Side, *de l' AMY E* had a Stock of Good-nature, Honour, and Sincerity; which had it been divided among his whole Sex, might have bless'd the Race of Womankind — he never *promis'd* more than he *perform'd* — his *Professions* never outsoar'd his *Meaning* — and tho' no Man that ever liv'd, had a greater Command of Language, he chose rather by *Deeds* than *Words* to express his Passion — In the whole Course of his long Amour with her, she had it not in her power to accuse him of having told her one Untruth — To the End of his Life he lov'd her with an undiminish'd Ardour — was strictly careful of her Reputation, while there was a possibility of preserving it — zealous for her Interest, and ever eager for her Love — Such a Ruin (as by the nicely Virtuous, the Sacrifice she made him of her Honour could be call'd no other) was too pleasing to permit her to repent it — Fame, Reputation, Grandure, all that the Generality of Souls are sway'd by, seem'd little in competition with his Love; and whenever the Reflection, that by the Laws of the Nation their Pleasures were no other than Criminal, came across her Thoughts, he had taught her to absolve herself, by arguing with her Conscience in this manner: Why (*said she*) should I condemn that as a Fault which *Heaven* ne'er made one! 'Tis Custom only and Priestcraft make me guilty — What Right had those imperious Dictators to impose Laws on their Fellow-Creatures? Not any of their Legends can boast a Divine Mission to authorize their Insolence — In former times, Plurality of Wives and Concubines was allow'd of, and to this Day are forbidden but by a small Part of the World — So far were the Suggestions of him who made it his

his chief Care to reconcile her to what she had done; but *Love*, and her extreme Admiration of him, furnish'd her with more — But suppose (*would she say*) it were indeed a Crime with any other Man, the Case is widely different with him I love; the charming, the unequall'd *de l'AMYE*, that Pride of Nature! that Boast of the Creation! cannot sure be thought to *err* while he obeys the first, great, undisputable Command — *Go forth and multiply* — A thousand Wives, were there so many Women worthy of his Love, should rather spread his glorious Image round the peopled Earth! adorn Humanity! and bless the Age to come! — With these, and the like wild Notions, did the Violence of her Passion transport her, and stifle all Remorse; which however really condemnable in themselves, serv'd to make her entirely easy in a Life which else must have been full of Disquiets.

BUT I forget that by these Digressions I shall become tiresome to my Reader: To go on therefore with the History of this (whom I may justly call) *Self-Abandon'd Fair*. Some Hours before she expected him, did the impatient *de l'AMYE*, pretending sudden Business, get rid of the Company he had invited, and returned to the Inn where he had left her; the Joy of their Meeting was proportion'd to that Excess of Passion they were mutually transported with; and he, having order'd his Affairs so as to be absent from Home, stay'd with her all Night, and without any more Resistance than such as but heighten'd Desire, enjoy'd those Charms a King had vainly languish'd to obtain. When a little Cessation from Rapture would give leave for cooler Conversation, they began to consult where, and in what manner she shou'd be conceal'd; and after many various Proposals on his side, and Refusals on hers, as being either dangerous, or improper; at last it was concluded she shou'd stay where she was, not only because
the

the People being of a mercenary Nature, Gold might make them entirely at his Devotion, but also that it being very near his House, he might with the more Convenience be often with her: to add to this, her Face was utterly unknown to them, and whatever Rewards might be offered by the *King* or *Madam de MONTESPAK*, for the discovery of *LASSELIA*, their Ignorance that they had the Charge of such a Person, would be her Security.

SHE lived for some Months in all the Felicity that Love, in the most elevated Degree, can afford to those who devote themselves entirely to that Passion; but, alas! how transient is a Happiness built on this Foundation? If the darling Object of our Tenderness, by some uncommon Principle of Honour, or a Constancy seldom incident to the Nature of Mankind, returns not with Ingratitude or Falshood the Condescensions we have made; the Hand of Fate, by some unforeseen, some unimagined Blow, dashes the short-liv'd Bliss, hurls us to lasting Wretchedness, and forces us to own, tho' late, the sad Effects of our mistaken Zeal. *Madam de l' AMYE*, who, as I have before observ'd, was not without a good deal of womanish Pride and Jealousy in her Nature, either by finding a difference in her Husband's Behaviour, or some other Reason, began to grow prodigiously disquieted, and resolv'd to know the Truth of what that Business was which he pretended oblig'd him to be so often from home, and where it was that he, of late, had pass'd so many Days and Nights. In order for this Discovery she sent a Servant, whom she cou'd confide in, to watch at a distance where his Master went: but the Caution of *de l' AMYE* rendred these Endeavours fruitless for a long time; for he never went directly to the Inn where *LASSELIA* was lodg'd, but made short Visits at several Houses which

happened

happened to be not far distant from his own : And 'tis probable that by this means she wou'd never have had it in her Power to have made herself wretched, by a Discovery of that, which for her own Peace, as well as that of the other Persons concern'd in it, had much better have been eternally conceal'd, if an Accident had not happened, that when she had almost given over all Hope of it, brought every thing to light.



The History of the two Madamoiselle DOUXMOURIES.

A FRIENDSHIP of a very ancient standing having been between the Families of *de l' AMYE* and *DOUXMOURIE*, it was mutually desir'd, that the former having but one Son, and the other no more Children than two Daughters, the Amity between them might be preserv'd by his Marriage with one of them — The eldest of them, being most favour'd by her Father, was the Person propos'd, and old *de l' AMYE* agreeing to it, every thing was concluded on before the Inclinations of the Parties themselves were consulted : The young Gentleman, who had been on his Travels, tho' he was every Day expected home, did not return till some Months after this Affair was settled ; so that his intended Bride had much the Advantage of him, in knowing to whom she was ordain'd. — The Expectations that she would be a very considerable Match, being Coheirefs with her Sister of a vast Estate, join'd to her other Accomplishments, had attracted a great number of Admirers, all which her Father oblig'd her to dismiss,

miss, and told her he had provided a Husband for her, whose Quality and Fortune were what he approved of, and whose personal Merits were not to be equalled by any of those who pretended a Passion for her: Nor was it from her Father alone she received this Character of him, several Gentlemen, who had accompanied him to some of those Courts, which he had visited for Improvement, being returned before him, reported him to be grown a perfect Master of all those Accomplishments which can render a Man truly valuable. The thing was publickly talk'd of, all her Acquaintance wish'd her Joy of a Happiness which was look'd upon as good as compleated, and among them there were not a few who wou'd have rejoiced to have had a possibility of putting themselves in her place, and envy'd her more for the good Fortune she was to enjoy in the Possession of so charming a Husband, than for the Dowry she received from her Father. She, who had a Heart intirely unprepossess'd with any other Object, was perfectly satisfied with the Choice had been made for her; and tho' it cou'd not be said she was in love with one whose Person she had never seen, yet 'tis certain, that from the prodigious Character she had heard of him, she had form'd so great an Idea of Happiness in being his Wife, that she obey'd the Commands of her Father in resolving to become so with an *Inclination*, at least, equal to her *Duty*.

At length, the long-expected Charmer was arriv'd; and as soon as the first Demonstrations of Joy for his Return were over, was inform'd by his Father of what he had concluded on for him: The old Gentleman did not fail to represent the Advantages of such a Match in Colours the most agreeable, and extoll'd the Merits of the Lady he design'd for him to so high a Degree, that a youthful Heart, naturally amorous, was easily inflam'd by

by so elegant a Description ——— The Fatigue of his Journey had not taken from him that Impatience and Curiosity which such an Occasion commonly inspires: He was eager to see her, and desir'd he might be introduc'd immediately. His Father, overjoy'd to find him in a Humour so much dispos'd to Obedience, comply'd with his Request, and they went together to the House of Monsieur DOUXMOURIE. Old *de l' AMYE* being told he was gone to take a Walk in his Garden, went to seek him there, leaving his Son in the Parlour till his Return, little imagining what Event that short Time of his Absence would bring forth. The youngest of the DOUXMOURIE's having heard the Congratulations which had been paid to her Sister on the account of her intended Marriage, and the Admiration every one that knew him had express'd of the graceful Person and Behaviour of him who was to be the Husband, had a Desire, which indeed had something more in it than Curiosity, to see him: and being told by some of the Servants that he was below, resolv'd to be a Witness of what so many had alledg'd in his favour: She had the better Opportunity of doing it, because her Sister was that Afternoon gone out to make some Visits: Therefore coming into the Room where he was, with a Gaiety and Freedom which is pretty common among the *French Ladies*, struck his Fancy, at first sight, with something to her Advantage, which she was far from expecting. He no sooner saw her, than he wish'd she might be the Person his Father had made choice of for him; and his Travels having furnish'd him with a good Quantity of Assurance, tho' no more than what is agreeable, provided the Person possess'd of it knows how to temper it with Good Manners, he presently made her sensible how happy he should think himself if she were the Daughter of Monsieur DOUXMOURIE.

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Young as she was, she was not so dull of Apprehension as not to understand him; but perceiving he either had not been made acquainted, or had forgot that there were two of them, forbore to remind him, prompted thereto by some secret Dictates, to which as yet she was herself a Stranger to the meaning of; and only answering him in the Affirmative, that she had the Honour to call that Gentleman Father, prevented him from giving any Check to the Passion which was just then kindled in his Soul: and thinking himself the happiest Man on Earth, to find in one Person all that cou'd indulge his Love, and at the same time gratify his Interest and his Duty, was too much transported to restrain his Joy, or wait the dull Formality of her being presented to him: but telling her who he was (which she knew well enough before) and asking her if she had never heard of such a Man, who had been flatter'd with the hope that he should, one Day, be blest in the possession of the Daughter of DOUXMOURIE: Yes, Monsieur, *(answer'd she, blushing, and with an Air which still confirm'd him she was the Person he wish'd, and also that the sight of him had given her Emotions, in some measure, proportion'd to those he felt for her)* I am, indeed *(said she)* the Daughter of DOUXMOURIE, nor are you deceiv'd in your Conjecture, if you imagine I have heard enough of *de l' AMYE* to make me impatient for his coming. He was about to reply to these obliging Words, in Terms full of Tenderneſs, when the coming in of both their Fathers prevented either of them from proceeding. After the first Civilities were over, Monsieur DOUXMOURIE began to speak of the Happiness he propos'd in uniting their Families; and young *de l' AMYE* assur'd him, that, in providing for him in this manner, he thought himself under greater Obligations to his Father, than for all he ever did, or wou'd do

50 *LASELIA: Or,*

do for him besides. You are infinitely gallant, *reply'd Monsieur*, and I hope, if what you tell me be your real Sentiments, you will have no occasion to alter them when you see my Daughter, who, not appriz'd of the Honour of a Visit from you, happens to be abroad; but I have sent for her, and I know she will be here immediately. What mean you Sir? (*interrupted de l' AMYE, strangely surpriz'd*) is not this Lady your Daughter! One of them (*resum'd the other*;) but she that the discerning Eyes of your rightly-judging Father has pointed out for you, as much exceeds her in all the Perfections of Mind and Body, as this might seem to do an untaught tawny *Ethiope*. It is not to be imagin'd what an Alarm these Words gave the Person they were address'd to — He hardly could recover himself so far as to be able to make any Answer, and when he did, it was in this manner: I doubt not (*said he coldly*) but that all your Family have Excellencies peculiar to themselves — but I should never with a nobler Satisfaction, than what is in the power of this young Lady to bestow. Had a disinterested Person been present, it would have been pleasant enough to have observ'd the Surprise and Vexation which appear'd in the Faces of the two old Gentlemen — They stood for some time looking on one another in a fix'd Posture, as if some supernatural Event had happen'd, which had depriv'd them of the Power of Speech, till the Father of him who had been the Occasion of it, first broke Silence in these or the like Expressions — You must pardon (*said he*) the Deference which my Son has Gallantry enough to pay to the *present* Fair — He has travell'd, you know, and that sort of Education generally inspires a Desire of becoming pleasing to all — I hope he is better acquainted with my Intentions, than to prefer, in reality, any to her I have appointed for him — Aye, aye, *cry'd the other,*

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other, it is all owing to this forward Girl—Leave the Room! (*continu'd he, turning to his Daughter, who had been all this while trembling with Confusion and Uncertainty how to behave in this Affair*) be gone! — You are too young for Conversations such as we are upon. Tho' by what after ensu'd, one may believe she wou'd have given her Soul almost to have staid; she was kept in too much Awe by the Severity of her Father, to dare to disobey him, and she went away in Tears; which so sensibly touch'd *de l'AMYE*, that not all the Respect he ow'd to the Presence of his Father wou'd have been able to have restrain'd him from uttering a much greater Part of his Sentiments, than yet he had done, if the immediate Entrance of that Lady, for whose sake the other had been treated in this manner, had not made it improper: She no sooner appear'd, than, after having paid a civil Respect to the two Strangers, she ask'd her Father what had occasion'd his Commands for her Return home. That, *reply'd he*, which I doubt not but all here will at last think themselves happy in. In speaking these Words, he presented her to *de l'AMYE*; and, for form sake, told her who he was, tho' the Servant who was sent for her had before related the News.

NOTHING could be more dazzling than the Appearance of this Lady; her Person was every way agreeable, she had the finest Hair and Complexion in the World, her Features were perfectly regular; nor could the nicest Eye find a Defect either in her Face or Shape, unless that she were something too tall; but then there was an Air of Majesty about her, which little People very rarely can boast, and which made her appear extremely charming——To all that Nature had bestow'd, *Art* had done its utmost to embellish her: she was dress'd in so rich as well as becoming a manner, as might easily inform those that saw her, there was

was nothing wanting from her *own Care* for the *one*, or *Indulgence* of her *Father* for the *other*. But not all the Attractions she was Mistress of, were sufficient to make her appear half so amiable in the Eyes of *de l'AMRE*, as did her Sister: there was an easy Freedom in the Behaviour, a winning Softness in the Air and Face of that young Creature, tho' dress'd in a more plain Apparel, and not set off with any Illustration, which took more with him, and he continu'd to think her infinitely more lovely in her native Charms, than this, adorn'd in all the gawdy Pomp of Finery, and Blaze of Jewels. The Passion he was possess'd of for the other, and the Reflection how indifferently she had been used on the account of this, work'd so strongly in his Soul, that he had scarce power enough over himself to pay her even those common Compliments, which cou'd not be omitted without ill Manners——

In fine, the little he said to her appear'd so forc'd, so different from what is dictated by the Heart, that a Person far less capable of judging than she was, might easily perceive he was little influenc'd in the manner she expected. By the Description I have given of her, I believe my Reader will not imagine her to be the humblest of her Sex; tho', had she been such, a Disappointment like this was sufficient to rouse the smallest Sparks of Pride, and kindle up Resentment; but as she really was of a Humour perhaps the least inclinable to pardon an Indignity of this kind, of all others, she grew all Fury, and her tumultuous Thoughts meditated nothing but Revenge; but if his not loving her had power to raise such a Tempest of Rage in her Soul, to what an infinite Degree did the Knowledge (which she soon after receiv'd) that it was to the more prevailing Charms of her Sister she ow'd this Mortification, transport her! All that can be conceiv'd of Violent, was mean to that with which her haughty Temper was agitated. The poor

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poor young Lady felt the Effects of it; her Father was so much intrag'd, that by her showing herself, the Match might probably be broken off between *de l'AMYE* and his favourite Daughter, that he wou'd not suffer her to come in his sight; but order'd she should stay in her Chamber, whence he vow'd she should never come out, unless it were to be dispos'd in a Monastery, without *de l'AMYE*, repenting the Declarations he had made in her favour, consented to the Consummation of what his Father had agreed upon for him — Nor was this all the Hardship she endur'd; she was deny'd Ease in her Confinement, her Sister was perpetually coming in to insult her, and whenever any Company or Business gave her a small Cessation from this Vexation, her own disturb'd Thoughts were sufficiently her Tormentors — She lov'd the charming *de l'AMYE*, tho' she had seen him but once, with a Passion as fierce, as violent, as her Soul naturally mild and gentle was capable of admitting. And the Impossibility there was, that her Father ever shou'd be brought to consent she shou'd be his, to the prejudice of her Sister, even tho' he should really like her well enough, to continue giving her the Preference in his Inclinations, I believe, by all who have experienc'd that Passion, will be allow'd to be a Torture poy-
nant enough to break a Heart more resolute than her's.

WHILE the Family of DOUXMOURIE were in these Perplexities, that of *de l'AMYE* was not much better: the young Gentleman plainly told his Father, he never would marry the Person propos'd, and obstinately refus'd making any more Visits to that House, unless he might be admitted to pay his Addresses to the youngest Daughter. This created many Arguments between them; and neither of them being able to overcome the Reso-
lution

lution of the other, the whole Affair, for some time, continu'd in suspense.

OLD *de l'AMYE* at length having, for many Reasons, a prodigious Desire his Son should marry into that Family, endeavour'd to persuade Monsieur DOUXMOURIE to give his Consent that he should have her he seem'd most to approve; but he was too partially fond of his other Daughter, to listen to such a Proposal: and since he had no other way to revenge the Contempt she had been treated with, increas'd his ill Usage of her Rival Sister in such a manner, that she would not have been able to have supported it with Life, had Heaven not sent her a Relief, by taking him away in whose power alone she was. He was taken suddenly ill of a violent Fever, and died in three days: but the approach of Death made but little Alteration in his Sentiments; he did not indeed wholly cut off his younger Daughter of a Child's Part in his Estate, but left her far inferior to her Sister, and that too to be forfeited if she marry'd *de l'AMYE*.

SHE was now, however, her own Mistress; and 'tis not to imagin'd that when she was so, she wou'd continue in the same House with a Sister, whose unforgiving Temper had cost her so much Uneasiness: She took Lodgings in the Town, and being still possess'd of her former Passion, tho' as hopeless as ever of gratifying it, sent to let *de l'AMYE* know she shou'd take it as a Favour if she saw him among the number of those who came to console an unhappy Orphan. — This Summons was too kind a one for a Man of his Gallantry to refuse, had he been less in Love; but still retaining the same Desire which the first Sight of her had inspir'd him with, tho' now degenerated to a less noble Aim, he obeyed with a speed which testified the Pleasure he took in it: The former Tenderness with which they had regarded each

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each other, encreasing by a nearer Conversation, both became, at length, too much overcome by it, to have the Government any longer of their Actions. — And, to what Extremes will mutual Love transport its Voraries? — They yielded to the all-commanding Force — gave up their Souls as Victims to his Sway — and prov'd that it was not in the power of the inexorable DOUX-MOURIE to deprive them of any other part of the Joys of Marriage than the Ceremony. The Consequence of this was, what might naturally be expected, the Censure of the World, and a living Proof that those Censures were not undeserv'd; but in spite of those too, which must be reckon'd stabbing Afflictions to a Woman who has any Pretence to Honour or Reputation, the generous Fair had too great a Tenderness for her lovely Undoer, to press him to take off the Reproach she suffer'd by making her his Wife. — A noble Friendship went hand in hand with the Passion she had for him, which would not suffer her to wish he should take to his Arms a Bride unportion'd; nor indeed, as his Affairs stood, great part of his Father's Estate being involv'd, could he have done it, without bringing manifest Destruction on himself, and her he married. But the Case stood not in this manner with the *Sieur le BLESSANG*. He, tho' infinitely superior to her in Fortune, wou'd have thought himself happy, would she have yielded to be his Wife; and when she heard the Rumour that every one's mouth was full of, of her Intimacy with *de l'AMYE*, he was the last that believ'd it; nor, perhaps, never would have done so, if her Sister, who hated her more deadly, since she knew the continued Tenderness *de l'AMYE* still had for her, and was ever watchful to expose her, had not contriv'd a Stratagem, to give him ocular Demonstration. She perswaded him to dress like a Footman, and under the Pretence of bringing a Letter from

from that happy Lover, he easily got Admittance into the House, where the unfortunate Lady was in her Child-Bed. — That Secret being also discover'd by the Spies of that assiduous Contriver of Diffension. — Having gain'd Entrance, Love, Curiosity, Jealousy, and a Resolution of being satisfied of the Truth, emboldened him to follow the Maid that carried up the Letter; and found her, indeed, as he had been inform'd, and the undeniable Testimony of what she had been guilty of, lying on the Bed by her. The Surprize he was in, in spite of all had been told him, to see her really in that Condition, was so great, that he had power to utter no more than, O! cou'd I have thought it! — Cou'd I have thought it! — and then ran down Stairs immediately — the Confusion she was in, at seeing a Fellow at her Bedside, and the Oddness of his Behaviour, hindred her from ordering he shou'd be stay'd — but when she open'd the Letter, and found it only a Blank, she perceiv'd she had been betray'd, and was immediately seiz'd with so violent a Disorder, that it threw her into Fits, which had like to have been fatal to her. There let us leave her for a while, and return to the enrag'd Lover, Monsieur BLESSANG — He had no means of venting his Indignation on her who had so ungratefully repaid his generous Affection, but he cou'd not bear the Man who deprived him of her Affections shou'd live; he therefore writes a Challenge immediately to Monsieur de l'AMYE, who, though he cou'd not guess by what way he had affronted a Gentleman who was altogether a Stranger to him, had too much Bravery to refuse meeting him, and went to the Place, and at the Hour appointed — It was natural enough, before they encounter'd, to enquire the Cause which had provok'd him to send a Billet of that nature; which the other answer'd with all Frankness imaginable,

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telling him the whole Secret by which he had discovered the Amour. — But, *said he*, (*not yet able to vanquish the Tenderneſs he had for her*) tho' ſhe is for ever loſt to me, and with her all my Soul holds dear, ſo precious is her Fame, and Peace of Mind to me, that if you will ſwear to recompence the Injury you have done her, by an honourable Marriage, I am willing to paſs over my own Miſfortune in Conſideration of her Happineſs, and will here change Vows with you, never to moleſt your Peace — *de l'AMYE*, tho' 'tis poſſible he might, after Poſſeſſion, have had Gratitude enough to have done every thing in his power for her Eaſe, knew very well his Circumſtances would not admit of his marrying in that manner; but either not willing to let the other into that Secret, or believing all he cou'd ſay on that ſcore would ſeem but as a Pretence to avoid fighting, thought it better abſolutely to reſuſe it — This threw off all the Good-will *Monſieur BLESSANG* before had to an Accommodation; and, drawing his Sword — Now, *said he*, nothing ſhall proteſt thee from me; I fight not now to ſatiate my Revenge on a Rival, but to puniſh a Villain, a baſe Violater of Innocence — Have-at-thee, then, *continued he*, (*making a Paſs at him* —) Defend thyſelf, if thou canſt, againſt the Cauſe of Juſtice, and of injur'd Virtue. He made his firſt Puſh with ſo much Fury and Skill, that *de l'AMYE* ſtood in need of all his Dexterity to parry it; but having foil'd him once or twice, and by this time equally enrag'd, gave a home Thruſt, with theſe Words — This, *cry'd he*, to ſhow how little I deſerve the Contumely thy raſh miſtaken Rage has branded me with — The unhappy *BLESSANG* cou'd answer to theſe Upbraidings no otherwiſe than with a Groan, which was indeed his laſt; for that Moment put a Period at once to his Love, Life, and Indignation. *Monſieur de l'AMYE*

78 *LASSELIA: Or,*

was exceedingly troubled at this Accident, not only because he had robb'd the World of a Gentleman whose Life might have been of Service to it, but also that he knew he had too many powerful Friends for him to hope to obtain a Pardon for the Misfortune he had been the cause of to them.— As he was reflecting a little on the Vexations which frequently arise from giving way to that Bane of Quiet, Love, he saw three or four People cross hastily over an adjacent Field, and seem to be coming directly to the Place where he was standing by the dead Body of him who so unluckily had fallen by his hand. Self-preservation put him in mind that this was no fit Place for Contemplation; and turning another way into a Road, the Entrance of which he knew very well, he made the best of his way to the Lady for whose sake all this had happen'd: he found her very ill, and not in a Condition to be acquainted with what he had to deliver, therefore was obliged to leave her; zealously entreating the Care of all about her, designing, if she recover'd, to write an account of all to her, as soon as he shou'd be in a Place of Safety; which not believing was to be found in *France*, he took Shipping immediately, and embark'd for *Flanders*; where when he had landed, he sent Letters to his Father, and some others whom he cou'd confide in, desiring they would let him know, by Post, every thing that pass'd concerning the Death of Monsieur BLESSANG. The first Answers he receiv'd, were little to his Consolation, tho' no less than he expected: The Persons whom he saw in the Field, were brought by the Servant who was employ'd in carrying the Challenge; who, imagining what it might contain, had come in hope to have prevented the Mischief; and finding they were too late, went that moment to a Magistrate, and gave in an Information —

He also was informed that great Search had been

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made for him, and that he must never expect to see *France* again, unless he meant the Visit should be fatal to him — But in the midst of all these sad Accounts, he had this to comfort him, that his Father was very busy with all those who were accounted Favourites at Court; that he spar'd no Cost nor Trouble to procure a Pardon; and that there were some among them, who had given him hope of succeeding.

THIS Misfortune was very terrible to old Monsieur *de l' AMYE*, not only because it depriv'd him of the Pleasure of his dear Son's Company, but also that it was the tearing to pieces of his already broken Estate: and the Trouble and Fatigue it occasion'd him, was such, as was very near bringing him to his Grave.

BUT what Tongue is able to express the Grief, the Distraction of the unfortunate Cause of all this Woe, when first she heard the fatal News: Had it not been prevented by the watchful Care of those about her, she wou'd not have liv'd a Moment to endure the Obloquy of the World, and those severer Stings of Conscience which she now began to feel, for having, by her ill Conduct, occasion'd such Scenes of Death and Ruin — The *Idea* of the unhappy *BLESSANG* was ever in her mind; and at some times Imagination work'd so strongly on her perplex'd Thoughts, as to make her think she saw him. She continued for some time in a Condition little different from Madness; but when Reason had a little recovered its usual Sway, a deadly Melancholy succeeded Passion; and tho' she had frequent Letters from *de l' AMYE*, in which he press'd her to come to *Flanders*, she cou'd not be prevail'd on to repeat that Folly which had caus'd such Misfortunes in the World, and which she now accounted as a Crime unpardonable: But to do all she cou'd to expiate it, after putting her Child, which happen'd to be a Boy, under the Care

80 *LASSELIA: Or,*

of a *Fryar*, of whose Goodness and Piety she was well assured, she retir'd into a *Convent*, where she resolv'd to pass the Remainder of her Days in Penitence. Her haughty Sister all this while exulted in triumphant Vengeance; but aiming still at the Life of *de l' AMYE*, she join'd her Interest, which was pretty considerable, with the Relations of the *Sieur BLESSANG*, the better to render fruitless all the Endeavours the unhappy Father cou'd make in his Son's behalf — But, at last, notwithstanding all the Efforts of Malice, he succeeded; a Pardon was sign'd, and he call'd home: It would be needless to repeat the mutual Transports of the overjoy'd Father and Son at meeting; whoever will give themselves leisure to think what they would feel in such a Circumstance, need not be inform'd — It had however been more pure, if not mix'd by the melancholy Reflection how much this Accident had impoverish'd their Fortune; and by making so many Enemies, took from the young Gentleman all Hope of repairing it, as he once designed by getting a Place at Court: but being inform'd of the Particulars of all that had been done in his Absence, he resolv'd at least to gratify one Passion; and putting on a Countenance as full of Gaiety as he cou'd, went to make a Visit to her whom his Indifference had made his implacable Enemy, *Mademoiselle DOUXMOURIE*. The Surprise which appear'd in the Face of the Servant who open'd the Door to him, gave him a sort of gloomy Satisfaction, not doubting but he shou'd create a much greater in the Lady he serv'd. He was not mistaken in his Sentiments; she no sooner was told he enquir'd for her, than a cold Sweat came all o'er her Limbs; she trembled like one in a Palsy, and not able to imagine what shou'd have occasion'd his coming, was not without a Thought, that repenting his Contempt of her, he meant to entreat her Pardon, and perhaps endea-

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your to expiate his former Coldness by a Declaration of Love. This was too agreeable a Belief for her to oppose it: For *de l'AMRE* having had the same Charms for her as for almost all her Sex besides, and her Hatred having only been occasion'd by his not loving her, such a Suggestion gratified more than one Passion in her: therefore, looking in her Glass, and setting herself in that Air which she thought would be most-engaging, she went down to receive him with a Pleasure, which those who knew the Violence with which she had express'd herself against him, would scarcely have believed. But how was she mortified, how much more insupportable was this second Disappointment, than the first he had given her; when instead of accosting her with humble Looks, and Words all compos'd of Sweetness and Persuasion, as she expected, he offered her nothing but Insults, and reproach'd her for her Inhumanity to a Sister, who he told her was infinitely more deserving than herself, in Terms so bitter, and so severely just, that tho' she could ill endure to hear them, her secret Soul avowed what he alledg'd, and join'd to torture her. This Self-Condemnation abated great part of the Fury his first Salutation had put her in, and at length, she either was, or fancy'd herself to be, truly sorry for what she had done, and opening all her Bosom, made no Scruple of confessing the Source of all the Mischief. She confess'd it was not *Pride* for the Preference he gave her Sister, which had alone stirr'd up her Resentment, but that Love, jealous, disappointed Love! had at least an equal Share in driving her to those Extremes she had been guilty of. — And at last fell so low, as to tell him, that if he yet cou'd bring himself to return the Passion she felt for him, she would repair the Losses she had occasioned in his Fortune, by giving him her own, and by publickly marrying him, testify to the whole

82 *LASSELLIA: Or,*

World from what Original the Hatred she had shewed to him had sprung: 'Tis impossible to describe with what a Look *de l' AMYE* listen'd to this unexpected Offer; all that can be conceived of Scorn, Contempt, and Detestation, were to the Life display'd in his expressive Eyes — but, as if they were not intelligible enough — Weak, vile Woman! (*said he*) as mean-spirited as base! Can you believe that I, who, when unknowing the foulness of your *Mind*, could find no Charm about your *Person* worthy my Regard, can now descend to take a Wretch who wants but Opportunity and the Temptation of the Devil to be a Witch? — No — did but one Thought agree — should I forgo my Principles, renounce my Honour, and debase my Nature but even so far — cou'd I but hesitate, if for a sordid Consideration I shou'd take to my Arms so loathed a Creature, I shou'd indeed be only fit for thee — but I too much despise thee to think whatever thou canst offer worth a Moment's serious Consideration — thou art now grown as much beneath my *Resentment*, as thou art unworthy of my *Pity*. I cannot have the same Sentiments for you (*reply'd she, fiercely, and running at him with a Penknife which she happened to have in her Pocket*) nor shalt thou live to triumph over both the Daughters of DOUXMOURIE.

SHE was very near plunging it into his Body, before he saw what it was she had in her Hand; and had not a Chair, by catching hold of her Sleeve, a little retarded the Speed with which she flew to him, he had inevitably fallen a Victim to her Fury; but easily disarming her, when he perceived what she was about, Wretch! (*cry'd he, if possible with an added Scorn to that with which he had before look'd on her*) Fortune will no longer assist the Mischiefs thou art form'd to execute. — Thou hast already done all to me thou ever canst have

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have power to do, by depriving me of thy Sister, and forcing my unwilling Arm to rob the World of so accomplish'd a Gentleman as the Sieur BLESSANG. — I now despise whatever Efforts thy future Malice may make against me — and leave thee an Object at once meanly *despicable*, and transcendently *wicked*. With these Words he flung out of her House, resolv'd to hear no more, had she attempted to speak; but the over-boiling Passions of her Soul suffer'd not themselves to be discharg'd in Words, but rising all at once, suffocated her, and she was found by her Servants in a Swoon.

To repeat the many Stratagems she afterwards form'd for his Destruction, would be as tiresome as impertinent, since none of them for a long time met with Success; and she had the inexpressible Mortification to see him in a small time married to a young Widow vastly rich, part of whose Wealth paid off the Mortgages of the Estate which was to descend to him, and they lived together on the Remainder in a manner more grand than eyes he had done before.

BUT now the Time was come at once to prove how dangerous it is to have a watchful Enemy, tho' ne'er so known a one, and to make LASSELIA sensible how much she had deceiv'd herself by false Reasoning when she concluded that Errors, such as she was guilty of, were little taken notice of by Heaven. The implacable DOWX-MOURIE, out of humour with the World, which afforded her a Gratification neither of her Love nor Resentment, was going into the Country to indulge a Discontent she cou'd not have so much leisure to do at *Paris*. In the Road to the Place she was going to, was that Inn in which *de l'AMYE* had plac'd his belov'd LASSELIA. It was the effect of the other's Ill-fortune, that she happened to bait there, and a little more fatigued than
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ordinary, resolved to go no farther that Day. LASSELLIA, who while the Sun was up, ne'er dared to peep abroad, used commonly to take the benefit of the Air in an adjacent Field every Evening: She was in one of those nocturnal Refreshments when Mademoiselle DOUXMOURIE, who in leaving *Paris*, had not left her Disquiets, weary of sitting alone in her Chamber, and it being too early to go to Bed, went to take a little Walk, accompany'd only by her Woman, whom she had taken along with her. It was their Chance to go into that very Field, which being very near the House, made it not unsafe for them to venture without any other Guard than their own Voices; which, if they were assaulted, might easily bring People to their Assistance. They had walk'd but a little way in it, before they fancy'd they stood in need of Protection; they heard a rustling among the Leaves on the other side of the Hedge, and presently after a muttering of Voices; they immediately imagined there were Robbers near them, and presently began to run back, crying all the way, Thieves, Thieves! — Help! Help! or we shall be murder'd in a Moment. There were immediately twenty People about them from the Inn, and some little Cottages which stood near it — What's the matter? Where are the Thieves? Bawl'd they all out with one Voice — O! just in that Thicker (*reply'd DOUXMOURIE, pointing toward the Place where she had heard the Sound*) — 'Tis not to be doubted but they ran in hope of a certain Reward, which had been allow'd to all who had the good Fortune to take any of these lawless Adventurers. DOUXMOURIE was so much out of breath with her Fright, that she was obliged to rest on her Woman's Arm, before she could go any farther; and she was not got into the House, when the Mob, her Outcries had rais'd, were returned: She stopp'd a little to know their Success —

cess — for Fear had magnify'd the Noise she heard to such a Degree, that she thought there were at least a hundred of them that made it — See, Madam (*cry'd one of the Fellows*) for what Cause you have been alarm'd — there were no Thieves; you have only made us interrupt a loving Couple — but, however, since we have been at the pains of taking them, we'll e'en carry them before their Betters — they shall give an Account who they are, and what Business they had there, before we part with them. It was to no purpose that the Gentleman endeavour'd, by mild Arguments (for to have made use of Force, would have been Madness) to prevail on this rude Multitude, to let him and the Person he had with him, who was dying with her Fears, go about their Business. They were obstinately bent, and all his Eloquence was thrown away on them. DOUXMOURIE was all the while they were talking, in the greatest Consternation imaginable; she fancy'd she knew the Voice of him who had fallen into this Misfortune, but cou'd not recollect where, or when she had heard it before; and the Moon being pretty obscure, and the Press of People who encompass'd him round, would not give her leave to see his Face; till being all come near the Inn, the People themselves running out with Lights, she immediately saw, to her inexpressible Surprise, as well as Joy, that it was the Object of her Harred, Monsieur *de l' AMYE*, and with him a Woman of a very good Appearance, (for *LASSELIA* had long ago thrown off her *Pilgrims Habit*) but that distracted Lady, willing to conceal herself as long as she cou'd, holding a Handkerchief to her Eyes, took from the other the means of knowing her, which else she must infallibly have done, having often seen her at Madam *de MONTESPAN*'s; but this she was certain of, that it was not his Wife, by the difference of her Shape and Stature; *LAS-*

SELIA being a great deal taller, and something more slender than *Madamoiselle de l' AMYE*, whom before her Marriage she had been intimately acquainted with.

THE Master and Mistress of the House were very much vex'd at this Accident, not expecting any other, than that by this Discovery *Monsieur de l' AMYE* wou'd be oblig'd to carry his Mistress and Generosity to some other Place: but to bring them off as well as they cou'd, they told the Rabble that they might disperse themselves, for they wou'd be answerable for the Character of those Persons, that the Lady was a near Relation of their own, and the Gentleman an Acquaintance who sometimes call'd to see them — Thus, with much ado, the Lovers at last had their Liberty; but were extremely perplex'd, lest this Affair should get Air. *De l' AMYE* cou'd not be certain that, among such a Number of People, there were not some who might know him; but that was the smallest of their Vexations; *L A S S E L I A* had till then been conceal'd with that Caution, that not a Servant in the House, but one, whose Fidelity the Mistress of it was secure of, knew there was any Woman lodg'd there, a Passage being made for her on purpose out of her Chamber into the Fields; and she never stirring but when it was dark, prevented her from being seen by any Body.

BUT it was now natural to suppose, that being found with him, and afterwards own'd as a Relation by the Inn-keeper, would create Suspicion enough in those sort of People; therefore they concluded that it would be wholly improper for her to continue there. But whither to remove her, he could not for his Soul contrive; tho' had he known how dangerous an Enemy he had in the House, and who had been both the Occasion and Witness of the Bustle which had happen'd, 'tis certain they would rather have chose to have shelter'd themselves that Night under the Boughs of some spreading

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ing Oak, than tarry'd under the same Roof with her. But the malicious DOUXMOURIE, to have the better Opportunity of compleating the Mischief she intended, withdrew the Moment she had seen his Face; which, by the Advantage of the Lights being brought behind her to the Place where they were, she cou'd easily do, before he cou'd, if the Distraction he was in would have given him leave, have perceiv'd her.

SHE went presently to her Chamber; but having several Servants with her, she order'd them to watch about the House, and bring her word of all the Motions of those two Persons: and being inform'd by the most diligent among them, that, for a certainty, that Gentleman and Woman lay both of them there, she pretended on a sudden to be taken extremely ill, and that not expecting to live an Hour, she must send for some Friends she had in that Country; so ordering a Horse to be got ready, that Footman who had brought her this Intelligence, having his Message given him privately, was dispatch'd to the House of Madam *del'AMYE*, where he was to tell her, that he belong'd to a Gentleman who had the greatest Concern imaginable for her ill Usage; and had sent to inform her, that her Husband having an Intention wholly to abandon her in a short time, of late had been very busy in disposing of some Lands, which Money he had made a Present to a young Girl, whom he was excessive fond of, that he design'd to live with her as his Wife; and as a Proof of the Truth of all this, she might that Night find them together at such an Inn — But that, if she requir'd this Testimony, she must not lose this Opportunity, which probably might never offer again — Mademoiselle DOUXMOURIE charg'd him, if possible, to fire her with a desire of coming immediately, because she was not sure how long they might stay. It was scarce a quarter of an

an Hour's riding to the House of *de l'AMYE*; and telling the Servants he had Business of greater Consequence than Life to impart to their Lady, she order'd he should be admitted, tho' she had on her Night-dress, and was preparing for Bed —

The Fellow perform'd the Business he was sent about with so much Art, that she presently assented to the Proposal of going that Moment to detect her Husband, on whose Ingratitude and Perfidiousness she bestow'd ten thousand Curses; but not thinking it proper to go alone, especially with this Man, who was altogether a Stranger to her, she sent to Monsieur *de VALIER*, and rouz'd him and his Lady, desiring they would come to her on an extraordinary Occasion — They obey'd her Summons, and were there by the time her Coach was got ready, which they all went into, accompany'd on each side by Mademoiselle *DOUXMOURIE*'s Man, two of *VALIER*'s, and one of her own, all on Horseback — As they went along, she told them on what Account she had entreated the favour of their Company; and they both took the liberty of assuring her, that had they been of her Counsel beforehand, they should have perswaded her against it, because in such Cases, Extremes are often fatal to the Peace of both, and that it was better sometimes to appear blind, than too quick-sighted: But Jealousy is not of a Nature to endure Controul; she was resolv'd to have the pleasure of upbraiding, and bid the Coachman drive as fast as possible. They got to the Inn about three in the Morning, when all the Family were drown'd in Sleep, except Mademoiselle *DOUXMOURIE* and those that sat up to attend her, and open the Door to those Friends she told them she had sent for.

HER Servant, who had the Conduct of the whole Affair, brought them up into his Lady's Chamber, where Madam *de l'AMYE* was not a

little

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little surpriz'd to find to whom it was she ow'd the Discovery she was about to make; and possibly, in spite of her own jealous Rage, wou'd rather have seem'd to have disbeliev'd all she heard, than gratify the Malice of this Woman, who she knew had the greatest Hatred imaginable to her Husband. DOUXMOURIE, perhaps, guessing at her Sentiments, as soon as she had put every body out of the Room belonging to the House; Madam, said she, I forbore to let you know I was the Person who, by the greatest Chance in the World, have this Opportunity of convincing you of the Perfidy of your Husband; because the open Enmity I have always profess'd for him, might have made you suspect there was more of Spleen than Justice in what I had told you: but as you are now in the same House, and on the same Floor with him, and the Person he prefers to you, I doubt not but before you leave it, you will satisfy yourself what 'tis he merits from you — All, and more, cry'd she, than my Resentment can inflict; and if it be as your Messenger inform'd me, by all that's sacred I'll — She was going to make some rash Protestation, when Monsieur de VALIER stopp'd her Mouth; Hold, Madam! interrupted he, I must not suffer you to give way to Passion, till you are ascertain'd you have cause for it — Anger sometimes blinds the Reason; and as this Lady avows her Hate to Monsieur de L'AMYE, 'tis not impossible but that she may have been mistaken, and has been led to credit something more than the Truth of him she is willing should be found guilty. This hinder'd the enrag'd Wife from saying any more, till Mademoiselle DOUXMOURIE recounting the manner by which she had made the Discovery, which she illustrated with abundance of aggrayating Circumstances, made her relapse into her former Fury — She was then for breaking open the Door upon them; tearing

tearing them to pieces; exposing them to the whole World, seem'd too little to satisfy the Wrong — She vented the Passion she was in with so much Vehemence, that she who had rais'd it, endeavour'd to abate it — Madam, *said she*, 'tis not impossible, but in such a House as this, there may be Back-ways; which, if there be, this shameful Pair are, doubtless, but too well acquainted with them: and should your Voice discover you are here, or any Force be used to get Entrance, before that can be done, they may perhaps escape, and disappoint our Aim — I, therefore, wou'd advise you to be patient till the Morning, which now is near at hand; and when either of them opens the Door, which one of my Servants shall diligently guard, we will all be ready to rush in upon them — This Method of proceeding receiv'd a general Approbation; and Madam *de l'AMYE* did all she cou'd to suppress the Violence of her Indignation at present; that it might fall more heavy on the Persons who had caus'd it; for she resolv'd in her own Mind never to forgive, or live with her Husband more.

THE Lovers who had pass'd their Time in as great, tho' different Anxieties, having at last fix'd on a Place to go to, thought it most proper to leave that they were in before Day-break; and accordingly Monsieur *de l'AMYER* rose, and opening the Door to call the Hostler to get his Horse ready, was surpriz'd to find himself, as he was stepping back into the Chamber, push'd violently in by a rush of People who follow'd him: The Candles they had in their Hands, immediately inform'd him who they were. As confus'd as he was, he had Presence enough of Mind to run towards the Bed; where he thought to defend his dear LASSELIA from their View, or die to expiate the Disgrace she must suffer for his sake; but that unfortunate Lady, hearing a Noise, had

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rais'd herself in her Bed to see what 'twas, which when she did, Surprise, and Shame, and Fear, took away her Senses so far, as to deprive her of any Thought in what manner she shou'd conceal herself; and sat still, stupid and motionless, expos'd to every body in the Room——'Tis hard to say whether the Fury of Madam *de l'AMYE*, or the Wonder that she and all her Companions were in, was greatest, when they found it was *LASSELIA* with whom he had transgress'd——nor cou'd either of them surpass that which *de l'AMYE* felt, to see *DOUXMOURIE* with them: He no longer doubred by whom he had been betray'd, and not answering the Investives which his Wife pour'd out upon him, he utter'd as many against that *She-Devil*, for that was the only Name he vouchsafed to call her by. While all were in this Confusion, Mademoiselle *de VALIER*, having a little recover'd that Confusion the sight of *LASSELIA* had occasion'd, having a tender Friendship for her, went towards the Bed with a design to have spoke to her, when the undone Fair, just then waking, as it were, from that Absence of Mind she had been in, into a Sense of the Shame to which she was expos'd, starting suddenly from the Posture she had been in, and catching Monsieur *de l'AMYE*'s Sword, which lay on a Table by the bed-side, was about to end her Life, and the Infamy that attended it: it was the good fortune of that sincere Friend to prevent this Act of Desperation from being accomplish'd; but the Attempt put the whole Company in so great a Consternation, as was of excellent Service to the silencing their Clamours. *De l'AMYE*, tho' he was ready to fly into his Charmer's Arms, and chase away her Despair by a thousand soft Endearments, yet he ow'd too much to his Wife, to give her so provoking an Instance before her Face, that she was but the second in his Esteem——but the Pain he endured

endured in this Restraint, took from him all Inclination to continue his Reproaches to Mademoiselle DOUXMOURIE; and he stood speechless, and seem'd lost in Thought, as did his Wife; who, tho' extremely fiery and passionate, had a great deal of Good-Nature, and so manifest a Proof of her Rival's Penitence and Despair, wrought on her so far, as to engage her Pity — and she thought, if that wou'd make her easy, she cou'd forgive the Wrong she had done her, provided she wou'd never more repeat it. Monsieur de VALIER, who had watch'd the Abatement of her Rage, perceiving her Looks were very much softened, begg'd her to withdraw with him a Moment into another Room; to which she having consented, he laid so many Arguments before her, how infinitely better it would be to hush up this Affair, than to make herself and Husband, as well as the Person who had injur'd her, the Chat of the whole Country; that she at last consented, on condition she wou'd immediately retire into a Monastery, thereby to put it out even of her own power to wrong her more — Having obtain'd thus much from her, he endeavour'd to bring de L'AMYE to consent; and was labouring a long time before he cou'd prevail on him but to promise an eternal Separation: but the Remonstrance the other made him, how he was indebted to his Wife for almost every thing he was possess'd of; her Love, her Faithfulness to him, her Good-nature, her condescending Temper, making an Allowance for that one Foible, Jealousy, won so far on his Gratitude, join'd to the Reflection how impossible it wou'd be for him to keep the possession of LASSELIA; believing, not without Reason, that if the Discovery of what had happen'd, shou'd reach the Ear of Madam de MONTSPAN, as in all probability it wou'd, she wou'd take effectual Measures to prevent his coming near her:

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her : all this put together, oblig'd him to an unwilling yielding to what was propos'd. While Monsieur *de VALIER* was thus employ'd with the Wife and Husband, his Lady, who had taken the Hint privately from him, was no less busy with *LASSELIA* ; she had a double Task to reconcile that distress'd Lady at once to the Thoughts of Life, and quitting the Conversation of her beloved *de l'AMYE* ; but the Power her experienc'd Friendship had given her over her, enforcing the strong Reasons she made use of, in a little time work'd their desired Effect ; and this Affair ended vastly different from what the beginning promis'd. The malicious *DOUXMOURIE* was the only Person vex'd at it — as for *de l'AMYE*, tho' he never ceas'd to think of *LASSELIA* with a Tenderness which cou'd not but be attended with some melancholy Reflections ; yet the Temper of his Wife, who, after this, took double Care to make herself agreeable to him, by degrees made him grow more chearful. *LASSELIA*, who, as she had promis'd, went directly to a Convent, strengthen'd by the good Advice of *Madamoiselle de VALIER*, who frequently visited her ; and the religious Conversation of the holy Maids she was among, in time was wean'd from those sensual Delights she had before too much indulg'd herself in, and became an Example of Piety even to those who never had swerv'd from it.



10 JUL 68

10 JU 68



THE
Force of NATURE:
OR, THE
Lucky Disappointment:
A NOVEL.

By Mrs. ELIZA HAYWOOD.

*Fate's dark Recesses we can never find,
But Fortune at some Hours to all is kind;
The Lucky have whole Days, which still they chuse,
Th' Unlucky have but Hours, and those they lose.*

DRYDEN.

THE
Force of Nature:
OR, THE
Lucky Disappointment:
A NOVEL.

By Mrs. H. WOOD.



There's a hard knock,
But fortune at some hours is all it kind,
The lucky hour whole days, scarce will they find;
The unlucky hour but hours, and those they lose.
DRYDEN.



THE
Force of NATURE:
OR, THE
Lucky Disappointment.

IN VALLADOLID, one of the largest and most populous Cities of old *Castile*, there dwelt a Gentleman call'd Don ALVARIO, who had a Daughter not more distinguish'd to Posterity by the remarkable Incidents of her Fate, than in the Age she liv'd; she was famous for her exceeding Beauty. The matchless Charms which appear'd in her, joyn'd to the Expectations of a vast Fortune, she being the only Child, made her desir'd in Marriage by almost as many as had seen her, and had Estates to countenance their Pretensions; but though she was arriv'd at the Age of Fourteen, which in *Spain* is accounted a very mature one, she had never discover'd the least Inclination to Love, or to the alteration of her Condition; nay, she express'd an Aversion

4 *The Force of NATURE:*

sion to all Offers of that kind. — Her Father was no oftner solicited to give his Consent, than she was on her Knees to conjure him to refuse it. — So strange, and so general a Disdain for all Mankind was surprizing to every body; but her firm Perseverance in it, joyn'd to a Reserve and love of Solitude, no less uncommon in a Lady of her Youth and Beauty, and who the Indulgence of the most fond of Fathers, might have enjoy'd almost what Diversions she pleas'd, at length seem'd to predict a Vein to a Monastick Life; and it was the Opinion of all who were acquainted with her, that in a little time they shou'd hear she ask'd Permission to retire into a Cloyster. ALVARIO, who desir'd nothing more than to see her married, was extremely troubled to find that of the many Proposals made to her, there was none which cou'd work the least Change in her Humour; and was often not a little perplex'd what it shou'd be, that render'd her so different from her Sex: But not all his Philosophy cou'd enable him to guess at the Truth, till an accident happened to discover it, and shew'd him that his Daughter was not of a Constitution so frozen as he imagin'd, nor her Insensibility so universal as she pretended.

THERE had been brought up with her in the House a young Man nam'd FERNANDO, whose Parents being reputed dead, Don ALVARIO had taken Charge of, and educated with the same Care, as he would have done a Son of his own, and indeed he had a Genius and Capacity so very capable of Improvement, that not to have given him all the advantages of Learning, wou'd have been an affront to that Power, who endu'd him with the most excellent Qualifications of Nature. The discerning Eyes of FELISINDA, for so the Daughter of ALVARIO was call'd, found something in him more to be admir'd, than all the

Or, the Lucky Disappointment. 5

the Grantees who made their Addresses to her could boast of, nor was he insensible of her power of Charming. They began to love each other, while they were both too innocent to know what it was their Wishes aim'd at; but as their Years encreas'd, what at first was no more than Friendship, or that tender Regard which Relations might feel for one another, grew up into a Passion; ungovernable Desires, tumultuous Emotions, and all the Symptoms of burning raging Love, with mutual Ardor swell'd in their throbbing Hearts — they now were sensible what 'twas they felt, they knew they lov'd, — but knew also that they were unhappy — the same Moment which instructed them in the one, convinc'd them of the other. FERNANDO, who had no dependance but on the favour of ALVARIO, and liv'd but on his Charity, had little cause to hope he wou'd bestow his Daughter, and the vast Possessions which were to descend with her, on a Beggar. Nor had FELISINDA greater Cause of Consolation; she thought as deeply on these things, as did FERNANDO, and cou'd not flatter herself with the most distant hope of ever being happy, at least while her Father liv'd. Both were perfectly acquainted with the Sentiments of each other, before either had Courage to confess them; but as that Passion will not always be subject to Restraint, it burst out at last with greater Violence, for having been so long suppress'd, and in spite of their Resolutions to the contrary, their *Tongues* declar'd what their Intelligible *Eyes* had betray'd before: they found some Ease however, in communicating and condoling their common Misfortune, in giving each other all the soft assurance, that Modesty would permit, of the most tender and inviolable Affection, and exchanging Vows, that whatever happen'd, never to be but one another's. — More than a Year past over in this manner, during which time
their

6 *The Force of NATURE:*

their secret Conversation was never in the least suspected to be any more than that friendly Regard which they being brought up together might create; and ALVARIO himself was so far from discouraging it, that he seem'd very well pleas'd his Daughter did not repine at the Favour he shew'd to one, who pretended to no claim by Blood, often saying, he would have her love him as a Brother, and commanding him to look on her rather as a Sister than the Daughter of his Benefactor. These words were so great an Encouragement to our equally enamour'd Pair, that sometimes they were on the point of confessing the Truth; but the Uncertainty in what manner to relate it, still prevented 'em. FERNANDO being arriv'd at the Age of Twenty, ALVARIO being pretty old and infirm, put into his hands the Management of his whole Affairs, depending on his Integrity and Capacity, in as ample a Trust as he cou'd have repos'd in a Son, the most worthy of being belov'd; and FERNANDO discharg'd himself in all things in the same manner as he wou'd have done by the most indulgent Father, whose Estate was to descend to him. — Some Disturbance happening among the Tenants, he was oblig'd to go into the Country, which was the first Absence he ever had from his Dear FELISINDA; they mitigated the Pangs of parting, by contriving a way to write to one another unsuspected. He had not been gone many days, before Don CARLOS, a Noble Youth, who had a long time made his Addresses to FELISINDA, and was very much esteemed by her Father, press'd the matter so home, that ALVARIO was at a loss how to answer him. He passionately desir'd to have him for a Son-in-law; but being unwilling to force his Daughter's Inclinations, he had hitherto deferr'd giving him any Answer, still hoping she wou'd grow less averse, as she became more acquainted.

Or, the Lucky Disappointment. 7

acquainted with the Merits of this accomplish'd Cavalier. He sent for her one Day into his Closet, to discourse her on the Affair, but was not a little troubled to find, that instead of complying with the Arguments he made use of to persuade her, she burst into a Flood of Tears, assuring him, that it was impossible for her to love that Gentleman, and conjuring him, not to make her for ever miserable, by an enforc'd Assent — She seem'd so overcome with Grief at the Apprehensions of what his Power might do, that he was oblig'd to dismiss her from his Presence; and the sooner, because he observ'd that in taking out her Handkerchief to dry her Eyes, she had let fall a Paper; which his Curiosity prompted him to read unseen by her. He saw it was folded in the manner of a Letter, and imagin'd that perhaps it might give him some light into the Reasons which had inspir'd her with so strange a Resolution: He was not mistaken in his Conjecture, but was more surpriz'd than can be well express'd, when taking it up, he found it writ by FERNANDO, and contain'd these Lines.



To the Adorable FELISINDA.

THOU I knew before, that my Passion for you exceeded all that ever fill'd a Heart, yet I never knew the Extremity of it till now; — I have been but six Days absent from you, and they seem so many Ages: how then shall I be able to support that tedious length of Time which I foresee ALVARIO's Business will detain me here? Were I employ'd by any other Person, I am very confident, I shou'd this Moment, born on the Wings of Love, dismissing all other

8 *The Force of NATURE :*

Considerations, fly to the Feet of my ador'd Charmer, and tell her how I have languish'd, how I have dy'd to see her ; — But as in his, 'tis your Affairs must suffer by my abrupt Departure, I must study Patience to endure it. I have, indeed, this Consolation in my Sufferings, that they are of service to her I love — But if while I linger here in the severest Agonies of Distrust and Jealousy a Soul can know, some powerful Rival, arm'd with Pomp and Grandeur, should supplant me in your Esteem, or if, which most I fear, a Father's absolute Commands should force you from your Vows, what name of Misery wou'd serve to represent the Horror of my State. — Despair and Madness are but mean Descriptions — the Damn'd, who prove what 'tis to feel the exchange of Heaven for Hell, can only speak it — Oh ! my FELISINDA ! pity me, comfort me, for methinks 'tis something more than the ordinary suspicion of a Lover, which tells me that this absence will be fatal to our Loves — I am so well acquainted with your divine Goodness, that I dare promise my self to hear from you by the first Opportunity. I will endeavour to console myself till then as well as I am able — Farewell, think of me as I deserve, and know me for

Your Everlasting Slave,

FERNANDO.

ALL that can be conceiv'd of Grief, of Horror, of Rage, and wild Astonishment, is short of what ALVARIO felt at reading this Letter. — He call'd immediately for FELISINDA, who not yet sensible of the loss she had sustain'd, came into the Room with more Courage than else she wou'd have done ; but startling at the Change she perceiv'd in ALVARIO's Countenance, and at the same time seeing the Letter in his Hand, the Surprise and Terror seiz'd her unprepar'd Soul with

Or, the Lucky Disappointment. 9

too much Violence, and giving a great Shriek, she fell at his Feet in a Swoon — The Noise she made, brought some of the Servants to her Relief, before her Father could have time to call them : Proper Remedies being apply'd, she was not long Senseless, but wish'd she had remain'd so still, when she found herself treated by ALVARIO in a manner she had never been before, and which her gentle Nature was little able to support with Life — She answer'd his Upbraiding only with her Tears ; and when he call'd her Hypocrite, Betrayer of the Confidence he had repos'd in her, Disobedient, Shameless, and every Name of ill his Indignation could invent ; she attempted not a Syllable to excuse or to deny what she was accus'd of ; but when he commanded her to speak, and reveal every Thing to him of this Affair, as how long since it began, how far it had proceeded, and utter'd some Words, which made her think he believ'd they had carry'd their Passion to lengths criminal ; she made her Defence with Resolution enough, assuring him with a great deal of Truth, that nothing had past between 'em (Wishes excepted) that might not, with all the Innocence in the World, be allow'd to those not nearly related. This seem'd to pacify him a little, and having order'd she should be confin'd to her Chamber, and strictly watch'd, that she got no Opportunity of writing, or sending to FERNANDO, shut himself into his Closet, to think what was best to be done.

FELISINDA was less concern'd, on Reflection of what had happen'd, than the Confusion she had been in seem'd to promise ; she consoled herself with the hope, that the first Gust of her Father's Passion being over, his former Indulgence, wou'd return, and influence him to compleat her Wishes : She was also pleas'd, that since their Loves were ordain'd to be discover'd, it hapned at a time when FERNANDO was absent, that

10 *The Force of NATURE:* 10

to the whole Storm of Indignation might fall on her alone; — the greatest Vexation she had, was, that she was without the Means of letting FERNANDO know what had fell out — she resolv'd, however, to wait the Event with Patience, and was studying what she should say to ALVARIO, to move him to forgiveness of her Fault, when he enter'd the Room, and with a Countenance, tho' less distorted with Rage than before, yet full of an Austerity, which she trembled at: FELISINDA, *said he*, I doubt not but your own good Sense, joyn'd to those Improvements of Education I have given you, have made you sensible enough of what you owe me, to be not only truly penitent for having offended me, but desirous also of having it in your Power to repair the Injury you have done my Peace, by your foolish passion for a Man, who tho' I very much esteem, you might believe for many Reasons, I shou'd not approve of for a Husband for you. The Almighty Power which form'd me, reply'd she, knows how dear I prize your Peace, and how sincere a Gratitude I feel for those, even more than paternal Obligations you have heap'd upon me; — but you know, Sir, that our Passions are not the effect of *Will*, but *Fate*; and if I encourag'd that growing One I long have known for this too lovely Youth, it was not without a Hope, you would one Day approve my Choice — the many Favours you have conferr'd on him — the Indulgence you have ever show'd him, always using him as you wou'd have done a *Son*, flatter'd my fond Wishes with an Imagination, that you might in time be won to make him so, especially when you shou'd know your Daughter's Life, nay, what is more, her everlasting Peace, depends upon your Grant. Don ALVARIO listned to what she said with tolerable Patience, till the latter part of her Discourse; but then, unable to contain himself, *VI* you

Or, the Lucky Disappointment. II

you ought, cry'd he, fiercely, to have been assur'd how far I was inclin'd to favour him, before you proceeded to such Lengths — which since ybu have done, your Crime be your Punishment — I shall take effectual Measures to prevent your ever meeting more — In the mean time prepare yourself to marry CARLOS, he is the Person I have made choice of for you, nor shall it be in your Power to delay the Consummation of that which I have long design'd — To Morrow is the Day, therefore, tempt not my Anger by a fond Perverseness, but resolve to be Obedient — Oh, Sir! interrupted she, falling on her Knees, if ever you thought me worth your Care, I beseech you — I conjure you, to revoke so harsh a Decree — Is it not enough to tear me from all I ever did or ever can love, but you must also doom me to one I hate — Condemn me to a Nunnery — cut me off at once from all my Expectations of Fortune, and of Favour, do any Thing rather than force me to violate those Vows high Heaven, and the conscious Saints have oft been witness of to my FERNANDO. The Power, resum'd he, more enrag'd, which shou'd have authoriz'd those Vows was *mine*, not *your's*; you had no right to make them, and therefore are not binding. Yet, Sir! cry'd she, consider — I'll hear no more, said he, remember who I am, and know your Duty — with these words he flung out of the Room, and left her in a Condition which no Expression can represent: To lose FERNANDO, terrible as it was, seem'd less distracting than to marry CARLOS; yet she found herself oblig'd to it by a Power, whence there was no Appeal — she wou'd have fled, and dar'd all the Extremities of Want and Misery, but she was too close watch'd — no Remedy appear'd but Death, and to that she wou'd certainly have had recourse, had the Passion which Don CARLOS had for her, been of the same

12 *The Force of NATURE :*

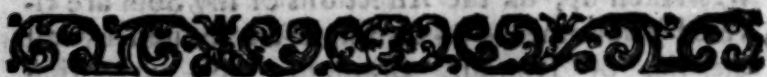
self-interested kind which influences the Minds of ordinary Lovers. That generous Man being told by ALVARIO, that the next Day shou'd give his admir'd FELISINDA to his Arms, made no doubt but that her consent concurr'd to make him happy, and desir'd to pay those Acknowledgments which her suppos'd Condescensions seem'd to demand from him; the Servants, who were acquainted with their Master's Intentions, made no scruple to admit him; but instead of those modest Blushes, and tender Fears, which are generally the Ornaments of a Virgin Bride, he found her on the Floor, her Hair dishevell'd, the usual Lustre of her shining Eyes extinct in Tears, and all the Symptoms of Dispair about her. Surpriz'd at an Object so unexpected, so alarming, he drew near, and endeavouring to raise her from the Posture she was in, entreated her to let him know the Causes of her Grief? And canst thou ask, said she, thou, who art thy self the only hated Cause? — but I'll be reveng'd (continued she, beginning to tear her Hair and Flesh) I'll be reveng'd, first on these Originals of my Woe — I'll pluck these Eyes out, mangle every Feature that attracted thy undoing Passion — I'll be no more the Object of Desire, but Loathing; and if I must be thine, I'll come to thy Embraces a hideous Bride — 'Tis hard to say, whether such a Behaviour inspir'd more Grief or Astonishment in the Mind of him who was a Witness of it; all that can be conceiv'd of soft, of tender, of obliging, he said to her to mitigate her Anger and assuage her Sorrows; assuring her with a great deal of Sincerity, that had he known himself so unhappy to have been hated by her, he wou'd have chose to die in Silence, rather than have occasion'd her one Moment's Inquietude. She rais'd her Head a little at these words, and the Violence of her Rage somewhat abated by 'em, she began to consider that he deserv'd

Or, the Lucky Disappointment. 13

serv'd not to be treated in that manner by her : Pardon DON CARLOS, said she, the wildness of my Despair ; I must confess I have nothing to accuse you of, but too much love for an unworthy Wretch, who has it not in her power to reward it — Your Passion is indeed the Source of my Misfortune, but then I should remember that Passions are involuntary, and perhaps 'tis as impossible for you to shake off your's, as it would for me to forget mine. A deathlike Paleness seem'd to spread itself all o'er the Face of CARLOS while she was speaking, and perceiving she had done ; Is it then, Madam ! cry'd he, in a faltering Accent, to your Kindness for some happier Man the wretched CARLOS owes your Disdain ? Not my *Disdain*, resum'd she, but my enforc'd Neglect : pity me then, and think what I endure, torn from all I love by a remorseless Parent, and given to one who, in spite of his Accomplishments, I hate — Forgive the harsh Expression, for believe, of all Mankind, I cou'd esteem you as a Friend — but, alas ! my Heart wants room to entertain you as a tender Guest ; long e're I knew your Merits it was taken up, all the Affections of my Soul are riveted to another — to him I am bound by all the ties of Honour, Gratitude, and everlasting Love, and him or Death I only can consent to wed. Am I then, said he, with a melancholy Air, the only Bar to FELICINDA'S Happiness ? The only immoveable one, reply'd she ; did not your wondrous Merits, make ALVARIO impatient to call himself your Father — my Tears, and my Despair, wou'd easily overcome all other Obstacles ; he wou'd not make me *Wretched*, but with design to make me *Bless'd*, which, ignorant of the force of Fancy, he thinks consists in being your's. Well, Madam ! resum'd CARLOS (after a little Pause, and two or three Sighs, which he vainly struggled to suppress) I were unworthy of declar-

14 *The Force of NATURE :*

ring myself your Lover, if I refus'd to fall a Martyr to my Passion; before Evening you shall confess that I deserve your Friendship: He left the Room as he spoke these Words, but with a Countenance so sad, and so dejected, that it mov'd her Pity, as much as what he said had done her Wonder — She was extremely at a loss for a Construction of his last Expression; but being far from guessing at the Resolution he had taken, imagined he had spoke in that manner only to amuse her, and that the next Day she shou'd be dragg'd to the Altar, and forc'd to assist in that Ceremony which must for ever deprive her of the hope of being her dear FERNANDO's. The Agonies of her Dispair return'd with the former Violence at this Suggestion, and she was meditating by what desperate Course she should avoid what she so much dreaded, when one of her Women gave her a little Billet, which being brought by a Servant of Don CARLOS's, and accompany'd by another to their Master, they thought it no breach of Trust to deliver her. The Contents of it were these,



To the sweet Destroyer of my everlasting Peace, the for ever ador'd
FELISINDA.

SINCE cruel Fate deprives me of the Power of being conducive to your Happiness, I readily yield my Life a Sacrifice, to be of Service to your Peace. I wish I could do more to establish your lasting Felicity with that too fortunate Engrosser of FELISINDA's Wishes: I go for ever from you; and since their

Or, the Lucky Disappointment. 15

is nothing so impossible as for me to live without you. I go to seek in some far distant Clime that Death, which if inflicted here, might give you some disquiet, by a too late Remorse, and unavailing Pity for the

Unhappy CARLOS.

IT would be as impossible to describe the Astonishment, and pleas'd Admiration, which fill'd the Soul of FELISINDA, at so uncommon a proof of disinterested Affection, as it won'd the Vexation of ALVARIO, when by the same Messenger he receiv'd a Letter from Don CARLOS, containing these Lines.



TO DON ALVARIO.

THo' the Possession of your lovely Daughter has long been the first wish of my desiring Soul, yet I chuse to relinquish my Hope of that Felicity, since I am too late convinc'd it was rais'd only by your Goodness: 'Tis to her Love alone I wou'd be indebted for the Blessing of calling her mine; and as her Heart is dispos'd of to some happier Man, beg I may transfer to him that Right you gave me; I cannot doubt but that he has Merit to deserve your Favour. FELISINDA finds so much in him; ——— and that my Presence may be no Obstacle to her Desires, I go this moment from Valladolid, and shall in a short time quit Spain, 'tis probable for ever ——— I make it my last request, that you will compleat the Happiness of her who, by a prior Obligation, had it not in her power to obey your Commands in conferring any on

Her Eternal Adorer, and

Your Obliged Servant,

CARLOS.

16 *The Force of NATURE.*

ALVARIO had no sooner come to the Conclusion of this, than he sent to inform himself of Don CARLOS, and hearing that he was really gone, and had order'd his Equipage to follow him next day, was so outrageous, that he swore never to forgive his Daughter the Disquiet she had occasion'd him; being by this Letter perfectly assur'd, that she had confess'd her Passion for FERNANDO to him, whom, if she had not been determin'd to persist in it, had been the last to whom she wou'd have reveal'd it. — He flew to her Chamber, reproach'd her in the severest manner his Indignation cou'd invent, and stung her to the quick with ten thousand Imprecations, that all she had persuaded CARLOS to, was ineffectual, for he wou'd sooner marry her to one of his Grooms than to FERNANDO. The violent and unaccustomed Fury he had been in, was hurtful only to himself; he was seiz'd immediately with a Disorder, which oblig'd him to take his Bed, and in a very few Hours discover'd itself to be mortal — He sent for a Lady, who every body knew he had a great Esteem for, her Name was BERINTHIA, she was Abbess of a Monastery of AUGUSTINES, and, in her Presence, gave directions to a Person proper to be apply'd to in such Cases, for his Will, and order'd the disposal of his Estate; which being finish'd, he liv'd long enough to sign it, and then, as he had no farther Business with Life, gave up the Ghost, without permitting FELISINDA to come into his presence. She was immediately inform'd of it, and the grief of losing a Parent, who had in every thing but her Love for FERNANDO, been the most indulgent one that ever was, joyn'd to the Shock of not being admitted to take a parting Blessing, threw her into Agonies, which for some time made her want but little of being reduced to the Condition he was in.

BERIN-

Or, the Lucky Disappointment. 17

BERINTHIA stay'd in the House till after the Funeral; and every thing being over, sent a dispatch for FERNANDO, who was yet ignorant of all that had happened. The Reader will easily guess, that when the Tidings was brought him, he was not altogether inconsolable for the Death of ALVARIO; who, tho' regarded by him with all imaginable Veneration and Gratitude, as his Patron and Friend, cou'd not be put in Balance with the Love he had for a Mistress——He believ'd himself now secure of FELISINDA, and was too full of that extatick View, to allow room for Grief. 'Tis also to be suppos'd that this Consideration was no small Alleviator of that fair Mourner's Sorrows——She cou'd not hear he was returning, and reflect that there was now no Obstacle to impede the Gratification of their mutual Wishes, without feeling a Pleasure, which overcame her Melancholy, and very much conduc'd to restore her to her former Health. When they met, tho' it was in the Presence of BERINTHIA, it was with all the Transports of the most violent Affection; but that Lady not permitting them to take more than one Embrace; Hold, cry'd she, mistaken Pair! you are not yet so secure of each other, as you may imagine; the Death of ALVARIO has not left you without a Bar between you, which I believe you will find it difficult to get over——But, continued she, I will not keep you in suspense, I know I seem to speak in Riddles, therefore will not delay the unfolding of your Fate. She waited not for a Reply, nor did the Amazement they were in at her Words, permit them to make any; but calling immediately for the Person who was in Possession of ALVARIO's Will, order'd him to read it out aloud; the Contents of which, after the customary Prelude in such Writings was, that he bequeathed his whole Estate to be equally divided between FER-

NANDO

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NANDO and FELISINDA, on Condition that they married not each other; for the prevention of which, he order'd that FELISINDA shou'd be carried into the Monastery of AUGUSTINES, under the Guardianship and Care of the Lady Abbess of that Place, and there to remain till either Don CARLOS shou'd return, or she shou'd make Choice of any other Person, whom BERINTHIA shou'd approve for her Husband: All this was set down in the most binding Form of Law, with the Penalty annex'd, of an Eternal Curse on them, if they broke thro' this Command. A Clap of Thunder tearing all before it, and threatning Nature with universal Ruin, cou'd not be more dreadful to the Lovers, than this unlook'd-for Blow; they had scarce time to testifie what it was each thought on this mutual and dreadful Disappointment, before BERINTHIA, punctual in discharging the Trust repos'd in her, told them they must part for ever; and finding neither of them seem'd to regard her Persuasions, was oblig'd to exert that Authority, which ALVARIO had transferr'd to her, and, by the Assistance of her Servants, forc'd 'em from each other's Arms. Never was there a more moving Scene; FELISINDA was carry'd into the Coach more dead than alive, and her despairing Lover left in an Agony of Grief, which came pretty near Distraction — Had these Orders been put into the Hands of any other Person than whose they were, he had certainly done some desperate Action, to have made 'em repent accepting the Commission; but BERINTHIA was a Lady for whose exemplary Piety, Wisdom, and Goodness, he had been taught to have the highest Veneration, and from whose Bounty he had formerly receiv'd great Favours, and beside, there was something in her, which he cou'd not account for, that more than all I have nam'd, commanded his Respect, and rendered it impossible for him to

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treat her as he wou'd have done any other in the like Circumstance — she staid some Moments, endeavouring to console him; but finding the storm of present Grief too violent, to admit of Arguments, left him to go to FELISINDA, who recover'd not from her Swoon till she was brought into the Monastery.

NOTHING cou'd be more carefully look'd after than she was by this good Abbess, who indulg'd her with all Tenderness imaginable, in every Wish but Liberty, and the Sight of her dear FERNANDO; but that, alas! was the All of her Desires; nor cou'd all the Arguments she made use of to convince her, how much better it was not to see him, since Fate had decreed them different Fates, than by continuing a Conversation, keep alive a hopeless Flame, which wou'd in time consume its Owners, have any effect at all on her; she still persisted in her Entreaties, for leave to entertain him at the Grate; and being still deny'd, had like to have fallen into a languishing Melancholly — There was in the Cloyster a young Devotee, whom Constraint more than Inclination had oblig'd to enter; her Year of Probation being almost expir'd, she had a greater Liberty than those who were but lately come in: This young Lady, whose Name was ALANTHA, took a very great kindness for FELISINDA, from the first moment she saw her, and consequently extreamly pity'd her Sufferings: One day as they were sitting together in ALANTHA's Cell, she entreated her to give her the History of her Misfortunes, and the Reasons for which she was debarr'd the Priviledge of the Grate, which every body beside herself enjoy'd; which when the other had oblig'd her in relating, she told her, if she could be of any service to her, she might depend on her readiness to do it. FELISINDA look'd on her as an Angel sent to relieve her, and made her ten thousand Retributions, and

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20 *The Force of NATURE:*

immediately assur'd her, that she cou'd be of the greatest importance, if she wou'd take upon her to deliver a Letter to FERNANDO, who she did not doubt wou'd be every day at the Grate, expecting to get a sight of her. ALANTHA told her, she wou'd not only do that, but convey his Answers also by the same means. This being concluded on, the Soul-afflicted FELISINDA, went to prepare her Letter; which she filled with a million of soft Complaining of their mutual Misfortune, conjuring him to everlasting Love, and renewing all the Vows she had before made never to be but his — As soon as she had finish'd, she return'd with it in her Hand to ALANTHA, who taking it from her, repair'd that Instant, where, as they imagin'd the despairing FERNANDO stood, vainly expecting when he should see the Charmer of his Soul appear, and not able to comprehend the meaning that among so many as he saw daily crowd to it, she shou'd never come in hope of seeing him, the description FELISINDA had given of him, made him immediately known to ALANTHA; but resolving to be certain, watched her Opportunity of the rest of the Nuns being withdrawn, to beckon him to come as near as he cou'd; which he obeying, she ask'd him if his Name were not FERNANDO? and he having answer'd her it was, she put the Letter into his hand: The sight of the Superscription, immediately inform'd him of the dear Writer; he snatch'd it from her with an Eagerness becoming his Passion, and putting it to his Mouth, seem'd to rivet his Lips to it — Suspend your Raptures, cry'd ALANTHA in a low Voice, till you are in a place more convenient to indulge them; here they may be dangerous to the continuance of your Correspondence — Come to morrow about this time, and bring your Answer. FERNANDO was about to make her some part of the Acknowledgments the Favour she had done him merited,

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merited, but she turn'd away as she had done speaking, and waving her hand to him to be gone, put him in mind, the greatest proof of Complaisance wou'd be Obedience; — and indeed she had good Cause for what she did, for he saw immediately after, the Lady Abbess herself coming toward the Grate—Tho' he passionately long'd to peruse the Contents of what he had just receiv'd, yet the regard he had for her, imagining he had been seen by her, prevented him from going till he had first spoken to her. She receiv'd him with that Affability and Tenderneſs, with which he had been accustom'd to be treated by her; but not all his Entreaties cou'd win her to give him a moment's ſight of *FELISINDA*; which he now preſt with the greater earneſtneſs, to keep her from gueſſing any thing of the ſecret Correſpondence he was in hopes to have by the Friendſhip of *ALANTHA*. But ſhe made uſe of the ſame Reaſons ſhe had done to *FELISINDA*, perſuading him not to reſiſt the Decrees of Deſtiny, but make himſelf as eaſy as poſſible in a Miſfortune which it was impoſſible to retrieve. He liſtned to her with that reſpect which was her due; but what effect her Arguments had on him, let thoſe who have experienc'd the Force of Love be judge: Having at laſt diſengaged himſelf, he went home, to ſeaſt Reflection, and revive decaying Hope, with the aſſurance that he was ſtill as dear as ever where he alone wiſh'd to continue ſo. His Answer to her's was much to the ſame purpoſe of what ſhe had writ, all Love, and tender Proteſtations; but becauſe there was nothing in either of them very material to the Story, I will not inſert.

THEY continued writing to each other conſtantly every day by the means of *ALANTHA*; and both of them enſlam'd with a mutual Ardor of conſummating that Happineſs they ſo long languish'd for, at laſt they hit on a Medium, which
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22 *The Force of NATURE:*

seem'd to promise them Success: ALVARIO's Estate was so vastly great, that being divided between them, either part was sufficient to enable the Possessor to live not only in a handsome but a grand manner; it was therefore agreed that FERNANDO should turn his Moiety into ready Money, and ship it off; for that when every thing was ready, by some Stratagem, which they trusted to Invention to contrive, she shou'd make her Escape from the Monastery, and go with him to settle there, leaving her own part the Forfeiture of the Penalty ALVARIO had laid on 'em. All this by Letters was carryed on and agreed to by each; and FERNANDO giving out that he could not bear to live in *Valladolid*, after the knowledge that FELISINDA was not allotted for him, he dispos'd of every thing without any suspicion of the true Cause for which he did it. BERINTIA, tho' she appear'd very much concern'd that he was going, did not offer to dissuade him, believing it wou'd be the only effectual means to cure him of his hopeless Passion.

NOTHING now remained but how to get FELISINDA from the Monastery: she was so diligently observ'd both Night and Day, scarce a moment without some or other of the Nuns with her, that her Escape seem'd an utter Impossibility. After a great number of fruitless Projections, at last it was resolv'd that FERNANDO shou'd leave *Valladolid* before any thing was attempted, judging, with Reason, that if he were gone, she wou'd be left much more at Liberty, and that he should commission some Trusty Friend to convey her to *Brussels*, where he having also been some time before, shou'd prepare every thing for her Reception. It was very difficult for FERNANDO to consent to the leaving her behind him; but there appearing no other means to free her, he was oblig'd to yield to the cruel Necessity. He took his leave in form of

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Or, the Lucky Disappointment. 23.

BERINTHIA, and express'd so unfeign'd a concern that he was not permitted to see FELISINDA before his departure, that that Lady had not the least suspicion of his Designs. The Person he entrusted to assist FELISINDA in her Escape, and conduct her to him, was one, of whose Integrity he had many Proofs, and he embark'd with more Courage than himself believ'd he should have had, so much did he depend on the Friendship of this Confidante, and the good Nature of ALANTHE: But now it was time for Fortune, who had long befriended him, to turn her Wheel, and change the pleasing prospect of approaching Joys, for Misery, Perplexity and Despair.

THAT Commiseration, which at first had induc'd ALANTHA to favour the Correspondence between these unhappy Lovers, were now turn'd into a quite contrary Passion; she found too many Charms in FERNANDO, not to envy FELISINDA the constant Assiduities he paid her; she never saw him without feeling a considerable addition of her Passion, and not knowing how, without a discovery of the Cause, to break off the Commerce she so generously had begun to assist, was almost distracted to think she was oblig'd to be aiding to her Rival's Happiness. Every thing being now in so fair a way for the compleating their mutual Felicity, and the Man gone, the sight of whom sometimes was all she had to enable her to go through so difficult a Task, her Vexation, her Despair, grew beyond all bounds. — She pass'd her Days in Agitations not to be express'd, and her Nights in Agonies, which were near depriving her of her Senses — The remembrance of every tender Expression FERNANDO had utter'd at the Grate in favour of FELISINDA, the transport which appear'd in his Eyes whenever he receiv'd a Letter, was like a Vulture preying incessantly on her vital Spirits; — but when she reflected that they

24 *The Force of NATURE:*

they wou'd in short time *meet* with all the Raptures of endearing Love, to part no more, she was utterly bereft of Reason — She was sometimes on the point of betraying all their Measures to the *Abbeſs*; but then the Reflection how guilty she must appear in having concerted them, prevented her. In this truly pitiable Condition did she remain some time; at last, the Friend of FERNANDO enquiring for her at the Grate, she went to hear what News, and was told by him, that hearing FELISINDA had now the liberty of walking in the Garden, he had found a way for her Delivery, and withal, ſlipped through the Grate a little Bundle and a Letter, ſaying, that contain'd Directions how she ſhou'd proceed: ALANTHA took it; but inſtead of carrying it as directed, retir'd to her Cell, and breaking it open, found it contain'd as follows.



To Donna FELISINDA.

THE Confidence Don FERNANDO repos'd in my Ability and Care in conducting to his Arms the excellent FELISINDA, is too great an Honour not to oblige my utmost Services — I have invented many Stratagems for your Escape, but none has so little the appearance of Danger as this which I now offer, it is a Ladder of Silk Cords, made so small, that you may easily conceal it in your Pocket till the happy Opportunity for making use of it arrives, which I hope may be about Twelve this Night — I presume, when the young Nun rises to the Bell, you may easily slip out after her into the Garden, the Chappel joining to it — there is a Breach I have observ'd in one part of it, and you may without much difficulty get up to the Top on the inside, then for getting

Or, the Lucky Disappointment. 25

ing down on the other, the Ladder, on which you will find two little Hooks to fasten it to the Wall, will assist you; it is strong enough to bear a greater weight than your's, and at the bottom you will find, with Horses ready to convey you, him who is with all sincerity yours and Don FERNANDO'S

Most zealously devoted Servant,

CLEOMAS.

AT reading this, a sudden thought came immediately into her Head, that she might at once disappoint FELISINDA of all her Hopes, and re-enjoy the Blessing once more of seeing her admir'd FERNANDO, by making use of the Ladder herself and passing on CLEOMAS for FELISINDA — she knew he had never seen that Lady, nor herself, but in a Veil, so that the difference between them wou'd not make discovery of her Treason — she cou'd not indeed expect a very kind reception from FERNANDO when brought to him, but she left the Event of that to Fortune, sometimes flattering herself that Time and Absence joyn'd to the improbability there wou'd then appear of ever seeing FELISINDA more, might abate some part of the Fervour of his Affection, and the discovery of a Passion so great as hers, win him to make a suitable Return — She resolv'd, however, to make Tryal of it; she could be, at worst, but rejected by him, and she should have this Consolation, that her Rival was not in possession of a Happiness which she vainly languish'd for.

SHE was not indeed without some Shadow of Reason in imagining, according to the Temper of Mankind, that FERNANDO wou'd in time be brought to prefer the present, kind, obliging Fair, to one who was at a vast distance from him, and who he cou'd not hope to see without encountering innumerable

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numerable Dangers — To cherish this Hope, she had the consideration of her own Charms, which in reality were such, as few cou'd equalize — In short, her Passion furnish'd her with Arguments sufficient to convince her, the Deceit she was about to practise, would be favourable to her Desires; and she was no less impatient for the Hour than FELISINDA wou'd have been, had the Letter of CLEOMAS not been intercepted.

THE appointed Hour arriv'd, every thing succeeded according to her Wishes; she got over the Wall with all the ease imaginable; and finding CLEOMAS at the bottom, was mounted by him on a Horse he brought with him for the purpose — they travell'd all Night for fear of a Pursuit, and taking By-Roads rendered it impossible for any who shou'd be sent in search of them to discover which way they took. ALANTHA hugg'd herself with the secret satisfaction of having circumvented her Rival, and began to assure herself of a fortunate Conclusion of an Affair, the beginning of which had met with so much success: But Heaven wou'd not suffer the Treachery she had been guilty of to go unpunish'd; by Deceit she hop'd to obtain her Wishes, and by Deceit it was, that she was made to repent the Injustice she had done. What is there so forcible as Love! when once that burning Passion rages in the Blood, vain are all the Tyes of Honour, Friendship, Gratitude, even Interest, the World's Idol, pleads but faintly when oppos'd against it! — The Charms of the suppos'd FELISINDA had an Effect too violent on the amorous Heart of CLEOMAS for him to retain any other Consideration — his Promises to FERNANDO, the long Friendship that had been between them, seem'd light to the Gratification of his Wishes. — He lov'd and must enjoy; he had an opportunity, and resolv'd to make use of it — He avoided, however, giving her any reason to suspect

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suspect the Sentiments he had for her, till they were in a Wood a little distance from the Port where they were to take Ship; the Solitude of that place adding to the Boldness which his wild Passion had inspir'd, he there began to talk to her in a manner which both surpriz'd and frighted her; but assuming as much Courage as she could, she answer'd him in Terms, which she hop'd might strike an Awe into him; but the Desires he was possess'd of were not of a Nature to be easily quell'd, the Delicacies of Love were what he was utterly a Stranger to, and capable of no reflection but the Satisfaction of his brutal Wishes, instead of desisting his Importunities, prosecuted them with greater vehemence, every moment offering at Liberties which made her tremble: Come, Madam, said he, the Attempt and the Accomplishment of my Desires are of equal Consequence — either wou'd ruin me with FERNANDO: I shall therefore take the securest Method to oblige you to secrecy, and at the same time make my self the happiest of Mankind—— in speaking these Words he forc'd her to dismount, and was dragging her into the thickest and most lonely part of the Wood, when her Shrieks and Cries drew a Gentleman to her Assistance, who happened to be walking a little distance from them for his Diversion; she call'd to him for Protection as soon as he came in sight, and begg'd him to defend her Honour from that inhumane Ravisher. CLEOMAS being enter'd into Villainy, wou'd not go back, resolving that nothing should prevent him from perpetrating the design he had begun: He had his Sword immediately drawn, and making a Pass at the other with greater Fury than Skill, lay open to the Thrust he gave, which piercing his Heart, he fell that moment dead—— ALANTHA, who had never been accusom'd to such Alarms, had not presence enough of Mind to sustain two such, as

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the offer'd *Violation* of her Honour, and the dreadful Consequence of *preserving* it occasion'd; she fainted away on the Grass as soon as she had seen CLEOMAS expire, and the Stranger drawing near to her Assistance, and lifting up her Veil, discover'd to his great surprize who she was, for he had been perfectly acquainted with her Family and self, before her Father, to gratifie a second Wife, had sent her to the Monastery — nor was she less astonish'd, when coming to herself, she found she was indebted to DON CARLOS for her Relief. It was indeed no other than that Gentleman, who a voluntary Exile from *Valladolid* had come to that place, with a design to embark with the first Ship bound for *Brussels*, having a desire to see that Court, and to try if Absence would have the Power to restore him to his former Tranquillity — tho' he had a great deal of Curiosity to know what strange Adventure had brought ALANTHA, so accompany'd, to that part of the Country so distant from her Relations, yet his Love got the better of it, and the first question he ask'd was of FELISINDA: she made no scruple to inform him of the Death of ALVARIO, his strange Will, which while it decreed FERNANDO to a Moiety of his Estate, debarr'd him of his Daughter, of the mutual Affection which was between her and that young Gentleman, and of the Stratagem he contriv'd to get her from the Monastery; but when she came to relate the Disappointment, which still detain'd her there, she paus'd and blush'd, not knowing in what manner to reveal either the Deceit she had been guilty of, or the Occasion of it. CARLOS, who was far from imagining the true Reason of her Silence, felt a painful Impatience to know the Consequence, and entreated her to proceed: If your Good Nature for me, said he, makes you unwilling to relate what you believe may give me Disquiet, I beg you to believe

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I suffer more in this Suspence. — but why do I name Suspence? I am already but too well assur'd she loves FERNANDO, and have demonstrated by resigning all those glorious Pretensions her Father's Goodness gave me, that her Felicity is infinitely dearer to me than my own — Speak then, Madam! continu'd he, speak the vast Endearments of this Happy Pair — Say their Designs were answer'd with Success — they met — were married — and now in some blissful Privacy reap the full Harvest of their promis'd Joys. The Agonies with which he utter'd these words made ALANTHA bear him Company in sighs; she knew by Experience too much what sorts of Pangs those are which accompany despairing Love, not to pity his; and willing to appease the present Tumult of his Soul, tho' by it she disclos'd the weakness of her own; No, Don CARLOS, answer'd she, you have this Consolation, that they triumph not over your too generous Passion, a sudden Caprice of Fate has rendred their Condition rather to be pity'd than envy'd — they trusted a Friend — that Friend betray'd them — they now are parted, 'tis probable for ever. — FERNANDO has Charms, which can subvert one's very Nature; turn Truth itself to Falshood, and force the Heart, most scorning Treachery, to practise it — at least, pursu'd she, holding down her Head, and putting her Handkerchief up to her Eyes, the lost ALANTHA has found it so — she cou'd no more, Shame and Confusion stopp'd the utterance of her Words; but this was sufficient to make Don CARLOS guess who it was had been the Betrayer of their Designs; however, being desirous of knowing the whole Affair, he made use of all his Eloquence to persuade her to a recital of the Particulars, which at length he prevail'd on her to do. — Never was amazement equal to what he felt at this Account — he had now no need
of

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of asking the Affairs of ALANTHA, the latter part of the History of FELISINDA's included them: He stood for some Moments bury'd in Contemplation on the Force of Love, and the strange Turn of Fortune in disappointing those Lovers, when each thought themselves on the very brink of Happiness——his generous Heart truly pitied their Distress, and as much as the Nature of the Passion he was inspir'd with would permit, wish'd them a relief. Not all the Pangs he felt from his Despair, cou'd render him self-interested enough to approve of what ALANTHA had done, and wonder'd that the same Passion shou'd produce Effects so vastly different——He, to give the Person he ador'd Content, had sacrific'd his own; but she had made herself unhappy, to afflict the Man she lov'd——He could not forbear expressing his Sentiments on the occasion, in Terms, which added to the Confusion she was before involv'd in, and as she was of a most excellent Disposition, soft, and tenderly commiserating the Woes of others, 'till Despair and Love rendred her incapable of being Mistress of her Actions, she look'd back with the utmost Shame and Remorse on the Perfidy her ungovernable Passion had inconsiderately hurry'd her to commit; and being willing to make what Atonement was in her Power, told Don CARLOS she was resolv'd to go to——where she knew FERNANDO waited in expectation of CLEOMAS and FELISINDA, and confess the Fault of her distracted Passion, and joyn with him in the finding some other Expedient, which might be more lucky than the former, to restore him to those Hopes her Falshood had depriv'd him of. CARLOS extremely applauded her Resolution, and to strengthen her in it, made a large Encomium on Self-denial, and represented how glorious it was to give Happiness to others, in so moving and elegant a manner, that she assur'd him

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him she wou'd endeavour to deserve that Character, tho' it shou'd cost her Life in the Attempt — He also acquainted her with his Design of going to *Brussels*, and assur'd her that he wou'd take care of her till she was safely arriv'd at Don FERNANDO'S.

Fix'd in this Determination, she remain'd in a Lodging, which the obliging CARLOS had hir'd for her, till the Winds, which were then perfectly averse, shou'd favour their Embarking. After a long and tedious Expectation, an Opportunity at length offer'd, — they had a prosperous Voyage, and in due Time arriv'd at *Brussels*. Enquiring for FERNANDO, they soon heard of him, but heard that he had that very day left the place, it was suppos'd to return to *Spain*, of which Country he had declar'd himself a Native: ALANTHA, who tho' she still lov'd him to an infinite degree, was perfectly sincere in her Repentance, and was vex'd to the Soul at missing the Opportunity of proving it — She complain'd of the Misfortune in Terms so lively and piercing, that CARLOS was prodigiously affected with a Generosity, which indeed his Example and Advice had the greatest share in inspiring, and offer'd to accompany her back to *Valladolid*, tho' it was a place, which to return to, he knew wou'd rouse afresh the Idea of his Despair; yet, full of an uncommon sublimity of Passion, he resolv'd to prosecute what he had begun, and fix the Happiness of FELISINDA, whatever became of himself — ALANTHA rejoyc'd at his Intention, and so eager were they in pursuing it, that the Fatigue of their late Journey and Voyage had scarce wore itself off; the Weather favouring their Intentions, before they enter'd on a Second — but ALANTHA unaccustom'd to the Toils of Travel, fell so ill at her Landing, that it was impossible for her to remove any farther, and

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CARLOS, who had return'd as well to make her Peace with the Lady Abbess, as to endeavour to be serviceable to FELISINDA, wou'd not go to *Valladolid* without her; the Disorders of her Mind, occasion'd by the terrible Violence she did her Passion, to render Justice to her Honour, added to her Malady, and she continued too weak to undertake a Journey for some Months in that Condition; therefore let us leave her for a while, to see what was become of FERNANDO.

THAT Faithful Lover, after having waited for some time the Arrival of CLEOMAS and his dear FELISINDA, grew at last so impatient at hearing no News of them, that he resolv'd to return to *Valladolid*, there to learn the Certainty of his Fate; a thousand different Conjectures had taken their Turns, to torture him which varied, but incessant Fears; sometimes he imagin'd some Accident had happen'd on the Road——at others, his wild Fancy presented FELISINDA dead——now he suspected CLEOMAS, then doubted her—he knew not what to think, nor which of these Evils would be least dreadful to be born——but as there is nothing more impossible, by a Mind not stupid and insensible of either Hopes or Fears, to be supported with Patience than Suspence, especially where Love and the Interest of the belov'd Object is in question, he cou'd not wait the slow Result of all-discovering Time, for the Certainty of his Happiness or Misery——He must immediately be assur'd; and to that End left——without any Consideration what might be the Consequence of being seen at *Valladolid*, if it were true that FELISINDA had left the Monastery—Nothing happening worthy of Remark till he came there, I shall pass over the Particulars of his Journey, and only say, that he was accompany'd with Cogitations, which every moment grew more and more

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more perplexing, and made little capable of feeling those Fatigues which must of Consequence attend all who Travel in that manner his Impatience made him; for no Shipping being ready to go out, he embark'd in a kind of Ferry, which are only made use of to cross some little Arm of the Sea, but are wholly improper to be trusted into the main Ocean; and it was not without the Assurance of very great Rewards, that he prevail'd on the Men who guided it, to venture on so dangerous an Expedition. It was indeed very near being a fatal one to them all, for they had scarce lost sight of Land, when a Storm arose, and tost the little Boat up and down with so much Violence, that at every Blast it seem'd to be o'erwhelmed — but the good Angel of FERNANDO was here, as in every other Accident of Life, most watchful o'er his Charge, and once more brought them safe to Shore. Our Heroe himself was convinc'd of the Danger he had been in, and willing to shun Death, chiefly because it wou'd deprive him of FELISINDA, was very well satisfied to find himself again on Land, tho' the Place they were driven to was little different from a Desert; no House was to be seen in it, and he was oblig'd to take Shelter with his little Company in a Cottage, which belong'd to a Fisherman, from the Fury of the yet continuing Tempest — Enquiring where he was, he found he was above Twenty Leagues distant from any Town; there was no such thing as a Horse to be had; and as soon as the Weather clear'd up a little, he was oblig'd to go on Foot, till he reach'd *Malla*, a little Village, where with much ado he accommodated himself, and in a few Days had the welcome sight of *Val-ladolid* — Nothing else having happen'd worthy of remark till he came there, I shall pass over the Particulars, and only say that he was ac-

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34 *The Force of NATURE:*

company'd with Cogitations, which every moment grew more and more perplexing, and made him little capable of feeling those Fatigues; which must of Necessity attend all who travel in that manner, which his Impatience had oblig'd him to do. So infinitely superior are the Disorders of the *Mind* to any the *Body* can sustain!

THE first Thing he did after his Arrival at *Valladolid*, was to enquire for *CLEOMAS*; and being told he had been a considerable time missing, and that where he had retir'd himself was utterly unknown, he fell into the most terrible Agonies imaginable; now, nor doubting but that he had play'd him false, and convey'd *FELISINDA* far from his Hope ever to see her more — He went directly to the Monastery, he shou'd hear in what manner she had been convey'd away by *BERINTHIA*, and from *ALANTHA* he expected something farther of his Misfortune; but before he had reach'd the outer Gate, he found himself seiz'd by Officers, who taking his Sword from him, told him he was their Prisoner, and must go with them — The Surprise he was in, prevented him not from asking the Cause of such Treatment, being neither indebted, nor guilty of any Crime, which submitted him to the Law. No, no, cry'd one of them, with the Insolence of those Villains in Authority, you think it no Crime, I suppose, to Steal a Maid of Quality from the Nunnery — but believe, before you get out of our hands you will be better inform'd — Aye, aye, added another of them, *Signor*, you are like to pay dear for your Pleasures — What, were there not enow kind willing Creatures but you must Ravish? Ravish from a Nunnery too! — they were running on with a great deal more such like insulting Expressions, which wou'd have been little supportable by a Man of

Or, the Lucky Disappointment. 35

of FERNANDO'S Spirit, at another time; and unarm'd as he was, oblig'd him to some desperate means of compelling them to more Civility: but the first part of what they said, had taken from him the Power of listning to the other; and not doubting but that it was on FELISINDA'S account he was apprehended, and that she was really gone, was now confirm'd in what before he trembled but to guess — Is it then true! cry'd he, in an Agony of Soul, which is not to be exprest, am I indeed so curst, so lost a Wretch? — Fatal Effect of my presumptuous Passion! — take me, continu'd he raving, do with me what you will — Shut me from Light, from Food, from sight of Man; load me with Irons, torture me with Racks, 'tis all too little for the curst Author of that Dear, that Heavenly Maid's Undoing — These Words, which his Despair made him utter, as being now perfectly assur'd that CLEOMAS had injur'd him with FELISINDA, or that some Accident either by Sea or Land had happen'd to destroy them both, serv'd to make him appear more guilty, and were afterwards alledg'd as Proofs against him.

HE had been some Days in Prison, before he knew for what Cause he was put there — the Grief and Confusion of his Mind not permitting him to ask any Questions, or send to any of his Friends, he concluded that FELISINDA owed her Death or the Ruin of her Honour to his unhappy Passion, and was so desperate, that he lamented his Confinement only as it kept him from the means of searching for her where'er he cou'd imagine there was a prospect of hearing what was become of her, which he now was far from hoping he cou'd do in *Valladolid*. He was full of Reflections too terrible for Description, and little inferiour to those which we conceive the Damn'd endure, and make the severest Woes of Hell, when the Goaler de-

36 *The Force of Nature:*

liver'd him a Letter, which knowing by the Character on the Superscription that it came from Donna BERINTHIA, he hastily open'd, and found it contain'd these Lines.



TO DON FERNANDO.

THE Interest I take in your Affairs, makes me not less concern'd at your Indiscretion, in putting yourself in the Power of your Enemies, than I was angry at the Crime which has justly created you so many. Had your Passion for ALANTHA been such as a Maid of her Quality and Accomplishments merited from you, why was not the Consent ask'd of those who had the Power of disposing her? or why was not I consulted, who for many Reasons would have rejoyc'd to have been serviceable in that Affair? — but I will not reproach you for what you have done, but according to the sincere Friendship I ever have had for you, advise you in what you are to do — Tho' I hope you need not any Arguments to prevail on you, to repair the Injury you have done that Lady's Honour, by publickly Marrying her, it is I know what will be exacted from you, and it will have much the better Face if you do it uncompell'd — FELISINDA joyns with me in this Request; for tho' she cannot very readily forgive a Rival, who under the pretence of Friendship, robb'd her of a Heart she thought herself secure of, has yet too great a Tendernefs for you to endure you shou'd suffer yourself to fall into the Inconveniencies and, perhaps, Dangers which you must else expect.

The

Or, the Lucky Disappointment. 37

The Father and Relations of ALANTHA, are preparing to bring you to a Tryal; I am afraid it will not be in the Power of all the Friends you can raise to enable you to stand against so just a Complaint as that alledg'd against you; neither will it be for the Reputation of any to attempt your Vindication — Even my self, prejudic'd as I am by Friendship, must plead against you in the Right of her who was committed to my Care — See therefore that you produce her — Produce her as your lawful Wife, and by that Claim, I hope you will be allow'd to compensate both with that Saint whose Shrine you have depriv'd of an intended Devotee, and the Family whom your ungovern'd Passion has dishonour'd — As for the Affront to me, I readily forgive it, and as far as it becomes my Sex and Place, shall Endeavour to soften the Severity of your Accusation.

BERINTHIA.

IT is here I must entreat my Reader to imagine himself FERNANDO; it will be otherwise impossible for him to comprehend either the Surprise or Joy, which at reading this Epistle seiz'd on his Soul — to find that FELISINDA was safe, was well, and in the Monastery, afforded him a Satisfaction adequate to the Tortures he had been afflicted with, while he believ'd it otherwise — But to find himself accus'd of a Crime of which he was entirely innocent, and to be told that she, for whose sake he had suffer'd so much, imagin'd him false, ungrateful, and perfidious, rais'd a Tumult in his Thoughts, which nothing cou'd equalize, but the Wonder what it was which had occasion'd Suggestions so vastly distant from the Truth — to hear that ALANTHA was gone, and FELISINDA remain'd behind, were Inconsistencies such as he could not reconcile, nor find any way to account for. — His Mind, how-

38 *The Force of NATURE :*

ever, being much more at Ease than it had been, he endeavour'd in the first place to clear his suspected Faith to FELISINDA, and his Honour to BERINTHIA, and accordingly writ to them both, which containing Repetitions of what the Reader is already acquainted with, will be but needless to insert — but not all the Affection which these Ladies had for him, cou'd make either of 'em believe the Asseveration he made that he was entirely ignorant of ALANTHA's Flight, and BERINTHIA seem'd extremely angry that the timely Caution she had given him, had been so little regarded: He writ to him again, assuring him that those little Evasions which he made use of to excuse himself to her, wou'd be of no weight before a Judge, and that it was rather an Aggravation of his Guilt, than the Contrary, to deny it — that ALANTHA's Escape was plainly prov'd to be by his Instigations, he having left a Person to assist her in it, and convey her to him, and that the Discovery of this happen'd thro' the distraction of FELISINDA when she found she had been abus'd with a fictitious Story, by a Letter which CLEOMAS had writtess to ALANTHA, and happen'd to be found after her departure in her Cell. — By this FERNANDO had something more light into the Affair of his Accusation than before — He now perceiv'd that ALANTHA had been taken away by CLEOMAS; but whether thro' mistake or design he cou'd not guess, any more than he cou'd to what place they were gone, or wherefore, if CLEOMAS were really enamour'd of that Lady, he did not also convey the other, as he had promis'd him with a thousand Oaths he wou'd — To all this he was yet in the Dark, and it appear'd so intricate a Business, that the more Conjectures he form'd, the more impossible he thought it for any of them to be the right: He gave himself not much trouble about

Or, the Lucky Disappointment. 39

about preparing a Defence against the Accusations to be brought against him; for conscious of his Innocence in all they shou'd alledge, he doubted not but to make it appear so——He writ, indeed, several other Letters to Donna BERINTHIA, and his dear FELISINDA; but they believ'd themselves so much affronted and injur'd by his Deceit, that they forbore sending to him for many days, which was a sensible Affliction to him; but he consoled himself with the belief, that in a little Time he shou'd be clear'd in their Opinion. One Evening as he was sitting full of various Perturbations, a Letter was brought to him from BERINTHIA, which gave him a great deal of Satisfaction to receive, not only because he hop'd to hear something of FELISINDA, but also that he felt a Tenderness for that Lady, which made him pleas'd to find himself not forgotten by her. The manner in which she writ to him was this.



To Don FERNANDO.

THOU' the little Sincerity with which you treat your Friends, ought to forfeit you their Esteem, I am still so much yours, as to conjure you not to trifle away your Time: Believe me, you will find all that is allowed you till your Tryal, too little to make an Interest, such as your Cause requires——You might indeed put an immediate end to the Difficulties you are in, by producing ALANTHA, and acknowledging her your Wife; but your obstinate persisting in counterfeiting an ignorance of her Affairs, makes me fear you design nothing that is Just or Honourable by that. Unhappy Lady; and the Grief it gives me, to

40 *The Force of NATURE.*

Perceive you have so little profited by those Advantages of Education, which you receiv'd from the Goodness of ALVARIO, or the Admonitions I have taken so much pains to give you, is infinitely beyond what you can have any notion of — I beg of you, however, if neither Conscience nor Gratitude can move you, that you will have some regard to your own Safety, and not, thro' yourself, wound more severely than you have yet done, the Soul of

the Afflicted

BERINTHIA.

'Tis hard to say, whether the Tenderness of this Letter fill'd him with more Softness, than the Reproaches it contain'd, did with Perplexity — He answer'd it as he had done the former ones, and long'd with an undiscrivable Impatience for the Hour in which his Innocence shou'd be known, and he restor'd to the Favour he was accustomed to find from her.

At length the long-expected Day arriv'd. He was summon'd before Persons appointed for his Judges; his Tryal came on, but not as he expected — He was charg'd not only with Stealing ALANTHA from the Monastery, but also with her Death; and nothing but his producing her, was sufficient to remove this Accusation —

It was in vain for him to attest his Innocence — in vain that he protested he never had any Acquaintance with that Lady, but as she befriended him in delivering his Letters to FELISINDA; his Oath wou'd not be taken in his own Defence, —

He had no body to appear for him, and his Accusers were numerous — all the Kindred of ALANTHA, with all the Interest they cou'd raise, — and to those he had a great many other as implacable Enemies added. — Seyerall there were who

Or, the Lucky Disappointment. 41

who bore him a secret Grudge for his being lov'd by FELISINDA, and not a few who, nearly related to ALVARIO, hated him on the Account of that Moiety of the Estate left him by Will, which they imagin'd an injury to them, and believ'd he had by Artifices wound himself into that Gentleman's Favour, and thereby defrauded them of their Right—— in fine, every thing was against him; Appearances and the Inclination of the Judges join'd to make him Guilty, and he was sentenc'd to Death.—— Donna BERINTHIA, who had sat all the Time of his Tryal in a Chair near the Bar, and with the greatest Anxiety of Mind imaginable had listned to all that pass'd; no sooner heard the fatal Doom, than unable to contain herself, she cry'd out with a great Shriek;—— Oh my Son!—— My Son!—— My dear unhappy Son! and fell that Moment motionless at the Judges Feet—— So strange an Accident and Discovery gave a prodigious Alarm to all that were in presence; and as she was a Lady whose exemplary Piety, Goodness and Wisdom, as well as the Function she bore, rendred her universally beloved and respected, every body was at Strife who shou'd be most assiduous in offering her Relief.—— Their Endeavours brought her in a short time to herself, but the first thing she did when she open'd her Eyes, was to throw 'em wildly round the place in search of FERNANDO, who from the Time of her Exclamation had stood like one bereft of Sense, so great was his Amazement at what he saw and heard. As soon as she perceiv'd him, Oh let me fly to him, said she, let me take a last Embrace—— let me in Tears and Blessings now pour out all the Mother on him—— A Mother never till now confess'd, and now too late—— A Flood of Grief here intercepted the Passage of her Words, she cou'd no more, and

42 *The Force of NATURE:*

as he had recollected himself enough to know what was his Duty, and had thrown himself on his Knees, she fainted away a second time, nor could all their Endeavours for a good while recover her — but when they had, resisting the violence of her Affliction as much as possible, and turning to the Judges, Pardon, my Lords, said she, my Woman's Weakness — I sooner, or not at all, shou'd have reveal'd this Secret; and if a Mother's Love could not permit her only Son to go to Death unknowing of her Grief, it ought not have been this August Assembly my Complaints shou'd have disturb'd — But since the long-hid Truth, in Spite of me, has forc'd itself thro' all the Bars Reserve and Prudence laid, permit me, as you know the Consequence, to acquaint you with the Beginnings of a Secret, yet only known to Heaven. Her Behaviour, and the Discovery she had made, had occasion'd so general a Consternation, that there was scarcely one in presence, who would not have given almost any thing to have had the Mystery unfolded; and those whose Priviledge it was to speak, telling her, that next to the having it in their Power to remove the Cause of her Affliction, nothing cou'd afford them so much satisfaction as the hearing an Adventure which could not but be very remarkable, and which happened to a Lady for whom all the World had so high a regard — The disconsolate BERINTHIA was not in a Condition to return the obliging things they said to her any otherwise than with a Bow; but after having paus'd a little, as tho' to call to mind the Particulars she was going to relate, began the Account she had promis'd to give 'em in these Words.

The



The Story of BERTINTHIA.

IT wou'd be needless to inform you that I was the only Daughter of the Marquis D'AVILA; I believe there are none here ignorant of my Birth, or the great Possessions I was left Mistress of by the Death of that *Grandee* — Therefore shall pass over those Days of Tranquillity, and begin at the Rise of my Misfortunes. My Father sometime before he dy'd had commenc'd a more than ordinary Friendship for Don FRANCISCO in-
somuch, that by his Will he was made sole Guardian of me and my Fortune — It was not more than a Week after the Funeral Obsequies were over, before I found I shou'd have Reason to lament his Choice. FRANCISCO had a Son whom his Avarice and Ambition aim'd to make the Master of the Marquis's Estate. He propos'd the matter to me in a manner which let me see he expected I wou'd consent. I know not whether Disdain or Anger had the greatest share in my Thoughts, while I was oblig'd to listen to what he said; but when I found he had done speaking, I answer'd him in Terms, which sufficiently express'd how much of both I conceiv'd for his Designs — He had the Artifice, however, to conceal his Discontent at my Refusal, and endeavour'd to soften my Resentment, by telling me nothing could have prevail'd on him to have been guilty of so much Presumption, but to save the Life of a darling Son, who was possess'd of too violent a Passion for me, to suffer him to live, if
I

44 *The Force of NATURE:* 10

I refus'd to encourage it. The Flatteries he made use of, were as odious as the Assurance with which he at first declared his Intentions; but to put an end to both, I told him, I thought it was yet too early for me to think of Love; but that in a proper time I wou'd consider on what he had said: I was indeed by this time a little vex'd that I had seem'd to resent so far the Indignity with which I thought myself treated, and thinking it my safest way to get the Power my Father had entrusted him with, out of his hands, before I let him know my real Sentiments, dismiss'd him with a greater show of Civility than he deserv'd, or than I cou'd, without doing a Violence to myself, assume. But a strange turn of Fortune immediately happening, the Complaisance I had before disssembled, I was oblig'd to make use of in reality—— Don PARANELLO, the Successor of my Father in his *Title*, enterd a Claim in the High Court of Judicature for the *Estate* also FRANCISCO had been bred to the Law, was one of the most Cunning that ever practis'd it, and, besides, was the best acquainted with the Truth of our Affairs of any body: It was on him therefore I cou'd alone rely; it was him in whom I was forc'd to confide, and to depend. The Suit was long, and made so great a Noise, that doubtless it has reach'd your Ears; the Success indeed was mine, but I was frequently in all Appearances so near losing it, and so much distressed by that means, (which as I have since heard was purposely contriv'd by FRANCISCO to work me to his Designs) that in the midst of my Trouble he extorted from me a Promise in Writing, to marry his Son, in case he shou'd secure my Patrimony. But, alas! before the Cause being determin'd in my favour cou'd encourage him to demand the Performance of the Contract, Fate threw a Bar

Or, the Lucky Disappointment. 45

to disappoint his Hopes, greater than that my former Aversion had oppos'd ——— ALVARIO being lately return'd from his Travels, was brought by his Father (there having been a long Intimacy between our Families) to visit me: Whatever Endeavours I had been making to enable me to keep my Word with FRANCISCO were now render'd of no Effect; I lov'd ALVARIO from the first moment I beheld him, and have had many reasons since to believe I made the same Impression on him ——— both felt a Passion too violent for Constraint, we lov'd, and we confess'd it to each other, but conceal'd it from the rest of the World. He thought it not proper to acquaint his Father with his Sentiments of me, till he saw how my Affairs would go, fearing that, tho' he had a great Esteem for me, he wou'd not be satisfied his Son shou'd marry a Woman who, 'twas probable, might have no other Fortune than her intrinsic Worth. ——— It was for this reason our Amour was kept a secret till after the Decree, and when it was past, my Engagements to FRANCISCO deterr'd me from revealing it. I very well knew the Advantages he wou'd have over me, if I attempted to break thro' a Contract, so solemn and so secure as that he had exacted from me it was with the most ardent and tender Sollicitations that ALVARIO was continually importuning me; either to run the Risque of all that Villain cou'd alledge against me, or to permit him to set me free, by driving from the World that Extorter of my Faith: but to neither of these cou'd I ever be brought to consent; I lov'd him with a Regard too sincere and disinterested to suffer him to be Partaker of my Misfortunes; and contenting myself for the present with the Happiness of daily seeing the Man who was so dear to me, lest the compleating my future Felicity to Fate, still hoping that some lucky Revolution wou'd

46 *The Force of NATURE:*

wou'd happen to make me Mistress of myself—
But in this Time of mutual Tenderness, I looking
on him as my Husband, being the only Man I
resolv'd shou'd ever be so, there pass'd between
us what nothing but the extreme Extravagance of
my Grief cou'd have oblig'd me to reveal ———

But there, continued she, pointing to FERNANDO
there stands the unhappy Product of his Mother's
too great Affection and unresisting Tenderness!

SHAME here, at what She had confess'd, was near
depriving her of her Speech; she stopp'd for some
Moments, unable to proceed; but perceiving the
whole Assembly had their Eyes fix'd on FER-
NANDO, and as she thought with a greater show
of Softness and Concern than they had done before
it, encourag'd her to resume her Story, which she
did in these Words.

THE Care which ALVARIO took, said she, in
concealing my Misfortune from the World, and
at the same time, under a borrow'd Name, expres-
sing the most tender Indulgence to the Child, was
some Alleviation of my Sorrows; nor did I doubt
but he wou'd gladly repair my Honour, by pub-
lickly Marrying me as soon as I had got rid of
my Engagement with FRANCISCO but that, alas!
was an Impossibility, and all the Offers I made
him to release me, were in vain; at last, tir'd with
a fruitless Hope, and unwilling to be the hindrance
of ALVARIO's Fortune, he being at that Time
lov'd by a Lady of Quality and Beauty, I retir'd
myself from the World, and gave my free Consent
that he should Marry, which he soon after did the
Lovely and Vertuous MARIANA, by whom he
had FELISINDA. Thus you see my Reasons for
entring into a Life, which I now find so much
Pleasure in, that methinks I wonder all my Sex
are not Monasticks, or how they can be so far
infatuated, as to prefer the bitter Sweets and Trou-
bles

Or, the Lucky Disappointment.

bles of a noisy World, to that happy Tranquillity a Cloyster affords ——— And thus, in the Confession of my Foible, are two Things unravell'd, which I am satisfied have hitherto seem'd Riddles, the one why ALVARIO, neglecting those who seem'd the nearest in Blood, left so much of his Estate to one believ'd a Stranger to his Name; and the other, why both that Gentleman and Myself so strenuously oppos'd the Marriage of FERNANDO and FELISINDA. If this Discovery may have the Effect it ought, to make those Relations of ALVARIO, who thought themselves wrong'd in his Testament, less discontented than they have been, and to prevail on FERNANDO to convert the Passion he long has had for FELISINDA, into that sort of Love, which a Brother may be allow'd to have for a Sister, I shall not repent that I have made it: and above all, if that unhappy Youth, now knowing it altogether impossible to gratifie his Desires by Marrying with FELISINDA, will discover where ALANTHA is, and make himself her Husband, I shall return contented to my Cell, and have no more to do with Care or Fear.

HERE the afflicted Lady finish'd her little Narrative; and the Compliments she receiv'd on her generous Manner of proceeding, were suitable to the general Esteem her Behaviour had acquir'd; but she was little in a Condition of answering them; her Concern for her Son o'erwhelm'd all other Regards; and as soon as she had done speaking, she turn'd to him, and by her Looks and Gestures sufficiently demonstrated how dear he was to her, and the Anguish of her Mind for what she expected him to suffer. The Judges highly commiserating her Condition, after a few Words of Consultation among themselves, told her, that in respect to the Agonies they saw her in, they
wou'd

48 *The Force of NATURE:*

wou'd delay the Execution of the Sentence on FERNANDO, that he shou'd have a whole Month to consider what to do; but if in that Time ALANTHA were not found, he must not depend on hope of future Mercy. They cou'd not hinder the transported Mother from falling on her Knees, to thank 'em for this unlook'd-for Reprieve; but FERNANDO seem'd little mov'd at it; and the Court was just going to break up, when a confus'd Noise was heard at the Door, and presently after they saw ALANTHA, led by CARLOS, enter, and come up to the place where they were sitting with a Hast which demonstrated their Impatience to be heard; which assoon as they were near enough, See here, most Righteous Judges! cry'd CARLOS, the Cause of the Debate before you; FERNANDO is Innocent, ALANTHA only is to blame, and comes repentant to confess her Fault, and clear the injur'd Prisoner. At these Words all the Assembly, as much now prejudic'd in Favour of FERNANDO as before they were the contrary, gave a great Shout; but the Judges commanding Silence shou'd be kept, resum'd their Seats, till that Gentleman recited all the Particulars of ALANTHA's Flight, as he had receiv'd it from her own Mouth, and what had happen'd to her since his meeting her with CLEOMAS in the Desert, the Fatigue that both of 'em had endur'd in the Search of FERNANDO, adding that it was only an Indisposition of ALANTHA's which had prevented their return to *Valladolid* much sooner, and consequently sav'd them the trouble of this Tryal; and FERNANDO, the Perplexity he had been in, for an Accusation which was altogether groundless. ALANTHA spoke not, nor was it necessary she shou'd, her Presence and her Blushes sufficiently confess'd the Truth of what he said ——— What were now the Raptures of the o'erjoy'd BERIN-
THIA!

Or, the Lucky Disappointment. 49

THIA! She ran to the generous CARLOS, embrac'd him with an Eagerness like that with which transported Lovers meet; then turning to ALANTHA, I cannot chide you now, said she, tho' your Offence has cost me many Tears, your Presence now o'erpays 'em all — but let us hast, cry'd she, to make the mournful FELISINDA Partaker of our Joy; she now may unoppos'd converse with FERNANDO: In speaking this, she took CARLOS by the Hand, in order to lead him to the Monastery; but that despairing Lover had receiv'd too great shock by her last Words, to be willing to accompany her: He thought he had done all that his Honour requir'd, and cou'd not impose so severe a Task on himself, as to be witness of a Happiness which he imagin'd so prejudicial to himself, and modestly begging leave to withdraw, put BERINTHIA in mind of what she had been told concerning his noble Passion for FELISINDA, and made her easily guess he had mistook her meaning; but resolving to compleat the Felicity of 'em all, if possible, told him he had nothing now to fear from the Rivalship of FERNANDO, and that she doubted not but the Visit she engag'd him in, wou'd be to his Satisfaction. Tho' he was far from comprehending what she meant, yet he consented to go with her, FERNANDO and ALANTHA follow'd, and when they came to the Monastery where FELISINDA waited with impatience BERINTHIA's Return and the Courts Result, the whole Affair was recounted before her. To endeavour to describe the Joy which CARLOS and ALANTHA felt at a Discovery so favourable to their Inclinations, wou'd be but vain: FERNANDO and FELISINDA, who cou'd not presently fashion themselves to forget the Passion they had regarded each other with, were the only Persons who had any remains of Perplexity; but that Lady justly weighing

50 *The Force of NATURE, &c.*

weighing the Merits of CARLOS, his constant Affection, his Generosity, and the Sufferings he had endur'd for her, consented, by the Persuasions of BERINTHIA, to make him Reparation, and give herself as a Reward of his Fidelity: FERNANDO following her Example, did the same by ALANTHA. And thus happily ended an Affair, which at first promis'd only a lasting Series of Misfortunes.

F I N I S.



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